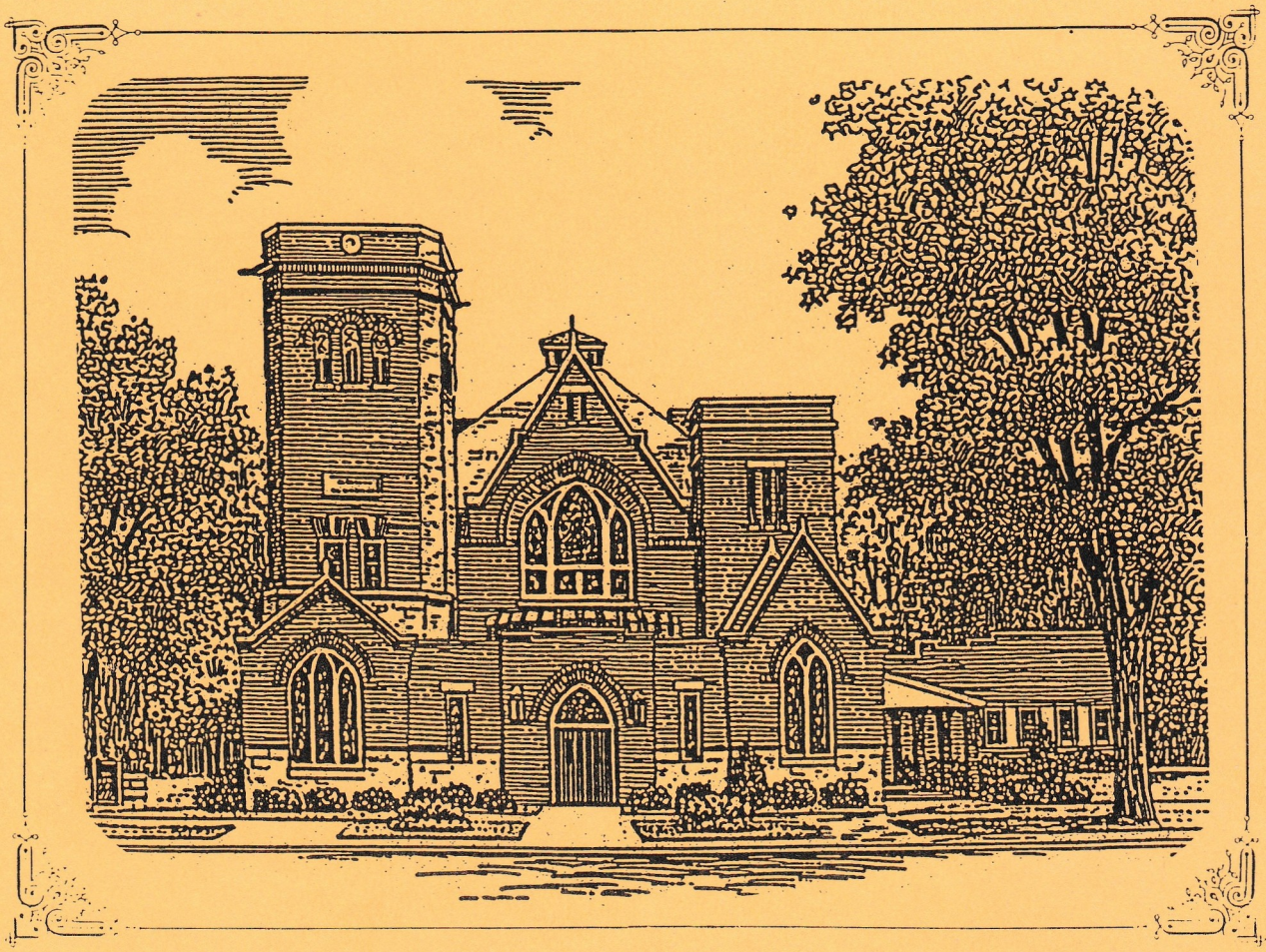

A CELEBRATION OF 100 YEARS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Fairbury, Illinois

2004

HISTORY

A major drive of the Westward Movement in U.S. History was the progression of Methodists, Evangelicals and United Brethren in Illinois and a few other mid-western states. Waves of social issues have come and gone, yet church structure appears somewhat the same. First – the Indians, probably Kickapoo, when a bloody battle in 1774 occurred and left only a few Indians, built a village on the east and south side of Indian Grove. In 1832, circuit-riding preachers were quite common. One such preacher was Jesse Walker of Ottawa, who was documented as having visited the Fairbury area. Permanent churches soon developed. Organized Illinois Methodism began about 1824 with the first session of an Illinois Conference in October of that year at the home of William Padfield. Those archives are in Bloomington, Illinois. The aforementioned archives include the original handwritten minutes of John Scripps with Bishop Robert R. Roberts presiding. Peter Cartwright, (1785-1872) probably best known of the early ministers in Illinois History was a known personality in this area. He is recorded as being opinionated about slavery, purity of the doctrine, education and politics. Cartwright was defeated for Congress by Abe Lincoln, which made very little difference in his life style. He was strong in his faith and carried on his duties as a circuit rider. Although there is little "proof" that Cartwright was in Fairbury, he was reported to have cousins here by the names of J. Young and S. Young.

FOUND – A 1887-88 Directory of Methodist: Episcopal Church, Fairbury, Illinois. *Blade Steam Printing House,* Fairbury, Illinois. Ten very small pages that include the regular services list, list of official Members, Ministers, trustees, Stewards, Class Leaders, Collectors, Choir, Sunday School Officers, Teachers and Committees. (see a reproduced copy on the display table at the Potluck.)

This little book is so complete it included the addresses of the members, such as "corner of Walnut and Fifth streets for a Jane Adams, and Mrs. W. A. Brown, Country, 3 miles south west." The list of members goes on to number 241 members.

The "Historical" section stated: The First Methodist Society was organized in Fairbury by Rev. W. J. Stubbles, in the Spring of 1858, with the following persons as members:

Isaiah Conn and wife, John Kring, Sr. and wife, Jacob Hunt and wife, A. J. Cropsey and wife, Isam Moore and wife, Frank Moore, R. G. Crouch, John Cumpston, Mrs. Ann Delilah Kring, Miss Catharine Kring. John Kring was the first class-leader. Services were held in the school house until the fall of 1858, when the first church building was completed at a cost of $1,600.

In 1876, during the first pastorate of the winter, the old frame church was torn down, and a large two-story brick building erected in its place. Owing to the lateness of the season, only the lecture room of the basement was finished, which was dedicated by Rev. R. G. Pearce, December 31st, 1876.

This was followed by a remarkable revival, resulting in the conversion of about three-hundred persons, more than two-thirds of whom united with the Methodist church,

On the 25th of June 1877, the church was blown down and wholly destroyed by a severe storm. The parsonage was also blown from the foundation and seriously damaged.

Not dismayed, the Society begun, in a few weeks, the building of the substantial and commodious home, which they now occupy. This was dedicated January 20th, 1878 by Rev. H.H. Adams.

The Central Illinois Conference held its sessions of 1880 in this edifice.

At the end of the directory are eight ads : The Grand Central Dry Goods Emporium, J.M. Greenebaum The Clothing Palace, Walton Bros.,J. F. Moberly, C. L. Perlee, Fawkner & Shepherd's, F. O. Hobbs and Pfaat & Slaughter.

Reflecting backwards, it is noted that the Fairbury church remained an appointment and part of the Avoca Circuit until 1863, when it was made a separate charge. Between the services conducted by the Circuit Rider Preacher, the congregation, for convenience, was divided into neighborhood groups with a Class Leader, who conducted the worship service in the absence of the pastor. These classes were all united in the Avoca Circuit; and the circuit, in turn, belonged to a District headed by the presiding Elder. In early days of the Fairbury church, the Presiding Elder was "not selected because of his executive work, but for his spiritual-mindedness, preaching ability and evangelistic zeal."

DEDICATION DAY AND GRAND RALLY OF THE NEW FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH...1903

"How Amiable are Thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts" ...as quoted from the Advance Program.

Mr. Joseph W. Powell was the guest speaker at this event. He was introduced as having been from Buffalo, New York, as one of the most eminent Layman of the Methodist Episcopal Church. "He is known from ocean to ocean as a Lay Evangelist and National Organizer of the Brotherhood of St. Paul, a Dedicative Lay Leader and worker among young people, and specially interesting to men. Endorsed and commended by the entire Board of Bishops, he will have general charge of all the later meetings of the day and will speak at every service. No one can afford to miss hearing him. Every member is expected to help make this the greatest day in our church history. Stand up and be counted November 15, 1903." Other information included in the pamphlet are the committees: The Executive Committee headed by the Rev. J. A. Johnson, D. D. chairman., with three other ministers, and no less than twenty-four others. There was also a Decoration Committee, chaired by Edward N. Kring, A reception Committee, Mrs, Della Walton, chairman, Sunday School Committee with I.H. Stover, Superintendent, William A. Baylor, Assistant Superintend, Bertha Chapman, Secretary, Greeta Shover, Treasurer, Edith Mitten and Gertrude Shook, Organists, Nellie Goshorn and Olive Baylor Librarians, and Minne Crouch and Fred Redfern, Assistant Librarians. Other committees are the Entertainment Committee, Mrs. G. B. Gordon, chairman, Music Committee, Charles Wesley Neitz, chairman, Epworth League Committee, Ira O McCullough, president, Introduction Committee, Mrs. L. B. Dominy, chairman, Usher Committee, W. L. Kring, Old Folks Committee, Mrs. E. W. Mahoney, chairman, Ladies Aid Society, Mrs. H. J. Ramsey, President, Mrs, T. S. P. McDowell, Vice President, MRs. Pearl Hawk, Secretary and Mrs. J. P. Mitten Treasurer. Lastly, the Commnittee on Brotherhood of St. Paul, Dr. H.A. Presler, chairman. Services on this day began at 9:00 A.M. with informal greetings, Organ Voluntary, Hymns, Apostles Creed, prayer by Rev. J. F. Robinson, D. D., Anthem by the Choir, Scripture lesson, music, sermon and the address by Rev. Powell followed by a hymn and benediction, the afternoon began at 2:45 with the meeting of officers, teachers, and Scholars of the Sunday School. At 3:00 p.m., the Sunday School Rally and the Young People's meeting was held, conducted by Rev. Dr. Frank G. Barnes. The addresses were given by Rev. Dr. Robinson, Rev. Dr. Barnes and Mr. J. W. Powell. The evening session, at 6:00 P.M.,was the Epworth League Devotional Service led by Rev. Dr. Barnes, president of Grand Prairie Seminary. At 7:00 P.M., the Anthem was given by the choir, a hymn was sung, followed by prayer and music by the Male Quartette, next was the sermon and address by Mr. J. W. Powell, a Dedicatory Service and benediction. This information was gleaned from the program bulletin dated Sunday November 15th, 1903.

As an amateur antiquarian, who hopefully moves beyond the popular definition of history as "the record of things that really happened", I find the stories that I've been told to be of utmost interest.

If this is a review of the first century of The United Methodist Church of Fairbury, this is also a reflection on the past. It is also recognizing the progress and preparation for the future. In the beginning of the research, there was a start to commemorate the past efforts and achievements. Now it's apparent that the heart of research reveals everyday struggles, prayer and triumphs toward a house of worship were often the same that we face today. Member's names are still recorded and recognized and members continue to struggle as they did 100 years ago. The odds of achievement are so much greater today that a person only needs to become active to find results. Our legacy of faith and high ideals, combined with sacrifice, equate to having the First United Methodist Church that we have today. The full scale promise of praising our Savior, and caring for one another, keeps us working together for our united church, while giving us an opportunity to share in the celebration of our heritage.

FEBRUARY 8, 2004

The following is gathered data from the local newspapers, church papers, verbal stories and photos.

By: **Alma Lewis-James (*The Blade)***

In the fall of 1957, the Methodist Church suffered a catastrophe. With enthusiasm generated by a beautiful, newly decorated church, somebody cleaned out the cupboards in the Tower Room, and into the bonfire went the irreplaceable records of the church societies. The only official data remaining are the two church brochures of 1887 and 1903, and the pastoral records, which were found to be incomplete.

It is for this sorry reason that the years of faithful devoted service by individual members must go

unrecorded now. These people made our church the living, vital thing it is today, and we are grateful to them.
We also wish to express our appreciation to *The Blade* in making their files available; to Miss Fern Carter for invaluable material and assistance; and particularly to Mrs. Ruby Bailey for her unflagging patience and memory, and her skill in answering questions.

By: **Alma Lewis-James**

THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCHES

The Village of Fairbury, Illinois was surveyed November 10,1857. During the following spring nineteen members of the Methodist Church moved there to live.
At first they held their meeting in the homes. Then, as their membership grew, they used the schoolhouse, and formally organized as a Methodist Society in July 1858. The following were the Charter Members: Dr. Lorenzo and Edith Beach, John Sr. and Rachel Kring, Catherine Kring, Mrs. Anna Delilah Kring, John Potter, Francis Moore, John Cumpston, Isaiah Conn and wife, Jacob Hunt and wife, A.J. Cropsey and wife, Randolf H. Maxwell and wife, Isam Moore and wife, and R.G. Crouch. Their pastor was the Reverend W. J. Stubbles, who held the charge at the parent church of Avoca, and John Kring was appointed Class Leader, his lay assistant.
Immediately they began plans for the erection of a church, and two lots, 5 and 6, block 30, were bought of Caleb L. Patton, Octave Chanute and Andrew J. Cropsey, parties of the first part. The price was $50.00. The parties of the second part were the M.E. Trustee: Francis Moore, A.J. Cropsey, Lorenzo Beach, John Cumpston, John Kring, Richard G. Crouch, Sara Busse, Isam Moore and Garrison Bowen.
Largely through the efforts of Dr. Beach, the frame structure, 32x55 feet and costing $1,600.00, was completed and dedicated that same year. It was dedicated by the Reverend J. W. Flowers, the Presiding Elder.
That it prospered is evident in the account of Fairbury in general as printed in *The Fairbury Intelligencer* of August 10, 1865:
"The Methodist Church with Rev. J.G. Evans as pastor, has, we learn, a membership of 150 and upward and a large congregation. Their Sunday School superintendent, N.E. Lyman, is said to be the finest in the country, having over two hundred scholars, and being conducted with ability and so, as to make it interesting to all."
They were compelled to enlarge the church the following year and this arrangement sufficed for another decade. When it, too, was outgrown, it was decided to build an entirely new one. This church was 45x75 feet and had a basement. It was made of brick to resist the village fires, which continually bedeviled Fairbury at that time.
They named it the Fairbury Centennial Methodist Episcopal Church, and the cornerstone was laid October 10, 1876, by the Presiding Elder, Reverend R.G. Pierce, and the Pastor, Reverend R. B. Williams.
Within the corner stone they placed a list of the Board of Trustees. Those were John Kring, Lorenzo Beach, W.K. Stafford, W. G. McDowell, O.P. McDowell, I.P. McDowell, James McDowell, S.G. Crull and Wm.M. Dever. The number of members was given as 160.
The stone also contained a card of the First National Bank; a Northwestern *Christian Advocate,* October 11, 1876; a copy of *Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean,* same date; a *Livingston County Blade*, ditto; a *Fairbury Weekly Independent*, October 13, 1876; a copy of the New Testament, and a twenty-five cent piece.
The auditorium of the new church was not quite complete at the end of the year, but the congregation assembled in the basement anyway. In honor of the occasion, one of the members, M.R. Stilwell, had cut letters from cardboard, which he gilded and strung into mottoes to bedeck the walls.
The Reverend R. G. Pierce dedicated the church, assisted by its pastor, Reverend R. B. Williams. This dedication, the paper said, was "followed by a remarkable revival resulting in the conversion of about 300 persons, more than two-thirds of whom united with the Methodist church."
Just six months after this, a tornado roared across the town, blew the parsonage from its foundations and seriously damaged it, ripped off the church roof and leveled three of the walls. On the remaining was left a lone festoon: " In God we trust."
It was a crushing blow, Dr. Beach had died, but Ben Walton was a member now. Through his energy, couragement and generosity, a third church was built on the foundation of the ruined one, while the members held their services in Fairbury Hall.
This third church was dedicated January 20, 1878, by Reverend W. H.H. Adams, D.D. of Bloomington. They now had, they proudly announced, a membership of 280 and 200 children were enrolled in the Sunday School.

In 1880, another sort of disaster befell them. All the church records were kept in the home of Judge Woodford McDowell, and when his house caught fire and burned to the ground, the records, too, were lost. The data were afterwards supplied from the memories of the surviving members, and so any discrepancies in some of the lists of members are easily understandable.
This cloud was only momentary, however, and May 13, 1882, the newspaper reported: "The young ladies of the M.E. Society are to hold a Doll Fair, and a Strawberry and Ice Cream Festival at the Opera House. The funds will be given to the tower fund of the M.E. Church."
Three years later, while their mothers were busy with socials to raise funds to repair the parsonage, the girls were continuing their efforts. This time they wanted a new organ, and when, at last, it was installed and in operation, it was quite generally agreed that "The new church organ placed in the Methodist Church by that society is a real pipe organ, and the finest instrument of its kind ever shipped into the country. It is almost the equal of a regular pipe organ."
In 1892, however, everyone had abandoned the attempt of trying to patch up the old parsonage. The building was sold to Mrs. Mary Haverty for $221.00, and moved away, while a "new and commodious parsonage was built on the old site."
It seemed that other things were needed too. During the winter of 1894, they had a blizzard and snow blew in through the roof of the church. With the coming of spring it melted and caused much damage to the ceiling. "The frescoing is damp and black, in fact ruined."
By July the repairs were under way. " A new roof is being put on the M.E. Church and the interior redecorated. It is probable that a new steam or hot air furnace will be put in, replacing the stoves."
A couple of months later *the Blade* had more to add.. "Lew Henderson and Henry Remington have been at work this week placing the new electric lamps in the Methodist church. The work has been done very artistically and effectively and the boys are entitled to much credit. The main auditorium is lighted by forty-two incandescent lamps including six in the Epworth League room and one in the hall. The chandeliers are ingeniously and beautifully utilized and the oil lamps are being left to be used in the case of necessity. A five-ball fixture above the choir station throws a flood of light where it is most needed.

Later: " new platform is being laid in front of the M.E. Church which will not only improve the appearance of things but remove the stumbling block from the brethren and sisters."
When it was all finished, *The Blade* was enthusiastic. "The M.E. Church building has been thoroughly overhauled and repaired. The walls have been re-plastered and beautifully papered. The Epworth League room has been enlarged and the galley has been much improved. The old stoves are to be abolished and a good furnace substituted. In order to put in the furnace, an excavation 50x15 feet had to be dug and much work done besides. The improvement in the appearance of the church is wonderful and the gain in comfort will be great."
This proved sufficient for exactly six years. By the turn of the century the membership had reached 542, and the church was overflowing again. Half- measures were not to be even considered, and they decided, once more, to build a brand new church, a good one.
September 19, 1902: "Dr. J.Johnson, pastor of the M.E. Church of this city, stated that the work of raising funds for building a new church in this city had progressed far enough so that it might be safely announced that the church will be built during the coming year. The plans are practically completed and the church will be one of the finest in this part of the state and will cost around $20,000."
November 12, 1903: " The committee on plans for the new Methodist Church reported to the official board Monday evening. Their recommendations, which were adopted, awarded to Robert A. Bullard of Bloomington, the contract for furnishing the plans and specifications. The outside dimensions of the building will be 64 x 98 feet and the material to be used will be Bedford stone and pressed brick, with slate roof. There will be three entrances to the building."
February 6, 1903: "The contract for the new M.E. Church was let Wednesday evening to English Bros. of Champaign, for $16,542.00 and the material of the old church. This amount covers the general contract, but does not include the heating, plumbing, seating, lighting or window lights."
March 6, 1903: "Farewell services were held in the M.E. Church Sunday morning and evening. The services consisted of reminiscences of the older members and were very interesting. Thursday, the contractor arrived and put a force of men to work tearing down the old structure and it soon will remain only in memory."

April 3, 1903: "The laborers employed at the new M.E. Church went on strike Tuesday in sympathy with the teamsters. The work was not stopped, however, as there were a dozen applications for work the next day. The men were getting $1.75 and $2.00 for nine hours work.

April 10, 1903: "The cornerstone of the new M.E. church will be laid with appropriate ceremonies next Wednesday afternoon at two o'clock. Rev. J.F. Robinson, the president elder, and the pastor Rev. J.A. Johnson, will officiate."

July 17, 1903: " The rest of the brick for the new M.E. Church arrived this week and the main tower is being finished. The plastering is almost finished and the church will be ready for occupancy by September first."

August 7, 1903: "The new windows have been placed in the M.E. Church this week and they are beautiful. It is expected the church will be completed in about three weeks."

These stained glass windows were memorials to various members of the church. The large window, on the east side of the church over the choir representing Christ with His hand raised in blessing, was dedicated to the Pastor, Reverend J.A. Johnson. On the south, the large window of Christ kneeling at Gethsemane was in memory of Mrs. Mary Frances Filley. Below it, under the balcony, were a series of small windows donated by the Epworth League, the Junior League, the Sunday School, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society and the Women's Home Missionary Society. On the west side of the auditorium, the large window of Christ and His sheep was in memory of Mr. and Mrs. David Sharp, and beneath the balcony were smaller windows for Mrs. Lizza Carman Jenkins and Samuel G. Crull. The one in the choir room is to the memory of Jesse Raridon."

November 15, 1903, the Methodists held a Dedication Day and Grand Rally. The Presiding Elder, Reverend J. F. Robinson and Mr. Joseph Powell, a prominent Methodist Layman of Buffalo N. Y., and the Reverend Doctor Barnes, President of the Grand Prairie Seminary, assisted the pastor, Reverend J.A. Johnson.

The services began at 9 A.M. with a prayer by the Presiding Elder, an address by Mr. Powell, and a sermon by the pastor.

In the afternoon was the Sunday School Rally, with addresses by the Presiding Elder and the Reverend Doctor Barnes.

In the evening, the Epworth League services were led by Mr. Powell, who gave the address at the 7 o'clock church services after a program of music by the choir and the male quartet. This was followed by the Dedication Service, and the Benediction."

And then, September 21, 1906, the Methodist held their big Jubilee Meeting. Every penny of their indebtedness had all been paid. Their new church, plus the moving and improving of their parsonage had cost them $27,003.87, and the buildings were now worth $35,000.00. Dr. Johnson was given the credit of being the moving force of this achievement.

By 1920, the church members were busy remodeling again. They provided new carpets and indirect lighting, the refinishing of the woodwork, and the wall redecoration in cream and tan. They also put on a new slate roof, and made many changes in the basement, the most notable of which was the completely remodeled modern kitchen.

Then, only thirty years later, the church had become intolerably crowded yet again. The young men of the church completed excavating the basement, thus making another large room for the use of the Primary Department, but above the stairs the situation grew steadily worse.

Finally, the membership having reached 630, the church organized a Centennial program of modernization. The Development Fund Committee has Carlos Thompson and Keith Anderson as Co-Chairman, Clifford Denker, Roscoe Combes, Roy Taylor, James Harrison, James Goold, Robert Maurer and Robert Monroe.

The Building and Planning Committee are James Goold, Chairman, Mrs. E. F. Dickey, Stanley Weeks, Keith Anderson, John Wagenseller, Clifford Denker, Logan Wilson and Si Moser.

They began their campaign November 4th, 1955, with a church-wide Loyalty Dinner. This was held in the high school gymnasium after church and at its conclusion, various speakers outlined the needs for improvements. Chief among these was for an educational building to be adjacent to the present church structure on the east. It would include several Sunday School rooms, a large room with a stage, a pastor's study, kitchen and adequate modern lavatory facilities.

Before this could be built, however, it was necessary to give the church itself a complete overhauling. The "gingerbread" was removed from the towers. Part of the roof was replaced and the eaves repaired. Spot tuck-pointing and sand blasting were prescribed for the brick walls. Indoors, a complete new heating system was installed and all the electrical wiring was replaced. The pipe organ was completely rebuilt,

as were the Chancel and Choir Loft; the woodwork was all refinished and the walls repaired and redecorated. The total cost was about $40.000.00.
All this has now been completed, and the work on the new building will be started as soon as the money is available.

EARLY HISTORY

Following the writing of Mrs. James, another document was found in the form of a business letter which indicates that the family of Marion McDowell Stafford, a now deceased member of the First United Methodist Church of Fairbury, had continued a long relationship with the church as was founded in 1857. Mrs. Stafford's great-grandfather, Dr. Lorenzo Beach, mentioned earlier in Mrs. James writing, was a charter member of the church. The cornerstone of the current church building was laid on April 10, 1903. Mrs. Stafford's grandmother, L.B. Dominy was very active in the church and presented the new church kitchen with its first set of dishes, five large sets of china, enough to serve everyone at their largest gathering. It is written that some of the beautiful stained glass windows were also donated by the Stafford family.
Mrs. Bernita Brown has also experienced a long-time membership with the church. She was a baby when she began attending with her mother and father. This tradition continues today with Denise and Roger Brown and their daughters Sarah, Shannon, Stephanie, and Shelleigh.
Mr. Si Moser celebrates seventy-five years of church membership . His immediate family includes Dean and Lucille Moser, with sons, Steven, Gary, Jim, Mark and David and their families, and Delores and Barry Free and family.
There are many others that share a long relationship with the church, unfortunately this author has not received the information in order to add it to this history. Recall also families well known in the church such as the Roscoe Combes family, Margaret Ziegenhorn ,a daughter, and a present member. More family names : Newnam, Steidinger, Metz, Aberle, Gerdes, Householder, Day, Doran, Sutter, Tredennick, and Zimmerman.
Mrs. Jessie Love and her family, Marge Weeks (Curtis, deceased) son Stan (Reva Carter Weeks) and their family and Liz and Jim Wharton family Mitch and David and Dr. and Mrs. Tracy Taylor and twins. Barbara and Harvey Traub, and children Mary, Eric, Bobbi and John and families, are more families remembered in this history.
Other names remembered, but no available histories at this writing include: Mr. and Mrs. Jack Schahrer, The Charles Schahrer family, Jerry Schahrer family. Another many generation family is the Dameron family with many generations in the church, from Jasper Dameron, son Harold Dameron, son Dale Dameron (Florence Sutter Dameron) and sons Lynn (Judy Ahring Dameron) their children, Dr. Heather Herr and husband John and children Sam and Aaron and Chris and wife Vanessa. The second son is Barry (daughters Mackinzi and Delayni). Daughters of the Dale Damerons are Peggy (husband Dan Vaughan and daughters Amy (Michael Klemmensen and children Bailey and Madeline) and Beth (Mark Robert and children Drake, Drew and Dannielle) and Carolyn (Wayne Gerber and family Kelsey, Ashley and Joel) . Others of that family Mr. and Mrs. Charles Maley and family Dale and Connie, children , Jacob and Stacey, Karen Munz and sons, Brian and Gregg , Lisa and David Roth and family Matthew, Mark, Kelsey and Katie, and Brad and Lori (Iler) and family Jeff and Amanda.
The list of church members is quite lengthy, with the families mentioned as examples of the depth of family in the life of this church.

HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Looking at the church building, we find a Victorian sanctuary, built in the Tudor style costing $21,000, an overrun of $1,000 was noted, but a jubilee meeting was held on September 21, 1906 as the congregation paid off every penny of indebtedness.
Three years later, the church pipe organ was dedicated with a price tag of $2,000. In 1952, the chain-drive system of the organ was replaced. The value of the pipe organ as it operates today is $250,000!
The church sanctuary underwent an extensive remodeling in February, 1961. Fourteen years later, the Church sold off farm property to undertake another major remodel and construction project.

THE CRADLE ROLL

Provided by Mrs. Florence Day
June 21, 1914.
"As living jewels dropped unstained from heaven"....Pollock.

John Patton Hoker.....July 10, 1911
James Albert Powell.....August 21, 1911
Florence May Householder.....October 3, 1911
George Curtis Farley.....October 5, 1911
Cora Christine Goold.....October 12, 1911
Mildred Lucile French.....May 10, 1912
Elizabeth Haymond.....Sept. 17, 1912
Claudine Mae Decker.....Feb. 9, 1913
Edith Evelyn Teasdale.....Mar. 29, 1013
Marvin James Goold.....April 9, 1913
Loren Kenneth French.....April 29, 1913
George Walter Bingham.....May 20, 1913
Charles Edward Weisser.....May 25, 1913
William Glen Martin.....May 31, 1913
Jack Herman Hummell.....June 15, 1913
Aldene Merne Ward.....July 31, 1913
Lenore Josephine Bittner.....Oct. 26, 1913
Cleo Belle Finnegan.....Jan 2, 1914
Rosemary Goslin.....Feb. 23, 1914
Edith Lucile Haymond.....May 2, 1914

THE CHURCH ORGAN

From the program of Dedication of Organ and Rededication of Church...Sunday November 24, 1957

"Behind the case, and in the console are thousands of small working parts and electrical circuits that must respond noiselessly and instantly to the organist's slightest touch. When the organist touches the keys a series of electrical circuits, magnets, valves and pneumatics operate, and instantaneously the pipes receive their wind. The pipe organ is not a single instrument, but a number of instruments in one, and contains sets of pipes varying in number with the size of the instrument. Each set of pipes represents a particular quality of tone in the organ. The organist acts as a conductor and a performer. The tonal structure is the difference between the pipe organ and orchestra. This organ was originally bought and installed behind the chancel area in the church about 1907. It was purchased from the Hinners Organ Company of Pekin, Illinois. The organ was known as the "tractor" type, in which the organist operated the keys and pistons, mechanical chains were a series of wooden levers, which over the years become worn and did not work with facility. The location of the organ pipes made it practically impossible to clean many of them, and many years of dust collections were affecting the tone. In 1956, the church contracted with Gratian Organ Builders of Decatur, Illinois, to remove the organ, rebuild it, and modernize it. A new chamber was built adjacent to the sanctuary to the north. This room is divided into two modern tone chambers with sound openings in the sanctuary. The organ contains 20 stops, or sets of speaking pipes. It has 947 actual speaking pipes, the largest being about eight feet long and approximately a foot square. The speaking length of the smallest is less than a half-inch and has a diameter smaller than a very think lead pencil. The action is all electro-pneumatic, modern in every respect, with an entirely new console." At the Dedication ceremony the organist was Mrs. Lillian Mecherle McCord from Illinois Wesleyan University.

CENTENNIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

"A gift is a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it." – Old Testament.
This verse was placed on the cover of the Centennial Development Program book in 1958.

"In preparation for our centennial year 1858 – 1958, proposed improvements included a heating system for the church, re-wiring of the entire church above the basement, roof repairs, tuck point mortar where necessary, rebuild chancel and choir loft areas, redecorate and repair walls, construct new Fellowship and Sunday School Building. Unfortunately, very little historical information is available about meeting notes or actual fundraising efforts. The following was gleaned from the program pamphlet issued at the time of dedication. The pamphlet indicated that the committee set forth to re-assert influence on the community at the beginning of its second 100 years." The formal time-line, as recorded in the *Review of Past Remodel/Refurbishing Efforts,* indicate the building committee members as James Goold, chairman Mrs. E. F. Dickey, Mr. Stanley Weeks, Mr. A. Keith Anderson, Mr. John Wagenseller, Mr. Clifford Denker, Mrs. Logan Wilson and Mr. Si Moser, estimated the costs at $73,038.00. The Centennial Development Fund Commnittee Members C.C. Thompson, A. Keith Anderson, co-chairmen with Clifford Denker, Roscoe Combes, Roy Taylor, James Harrison, James Goold, and Robert Maurer, made the goal for financial support –" the top few gifts must total $15,000, there must be at least fifteen additional gifts of $1,000 or more, at least fifteen families must give $750 or more, another twenty-five families must give $500 or more, and the remainder of the membership must give as generously as

possible to reach the monetary goals needed to complete the project."
November 20, 1957, a Congregational meeting was held to authorize the Trustee Committee to borrow $25,000 to begin construction of the fellowship building.
December 1, 1957, ground-breaking ceremonies for the new fellowship building were held immediately after church service on this Sunday.
During Winter 1957-58, plans were drawn, pledges were made, construction actually began on the new fellowship building.
April 1958, the building was complete and ready to use. The open house was set for November 15,1958. Thus the Open House – Centennial year celebration.
February 13th, 1961, the official board voted to name the new building "Fellowship Building". Costs to build the Fellowship Building were $42,000.

OTHER REMODELING AND REFURBISHING

May 27, 1969. A special Administrative Board meeting for Long-range Planning began with the committee members giving a detailed report as to the proposed changes: new sanctuary seating, new floor covering, redecorating and refurbishing the sanctuary, adding air conditioning to Fellowship Building, relocating the minister and secretary offices and add new front entrance. After discussion, a motion was made to adapt, as of then, the first three priorities: 1. new sanctuary seating, 2. new floor covering and 3. re-decorate and refurbish the sanctuary. The committees involved were: Administrative Council, Trustee Committee, Long Range Planning Committee, Finance Committee, Building Committee (appointed to get plans and estimates for proposed work) and approval by the Charge Conference. Rev. George Russell, minister at this time.
December 16, 1969, the Trustee Committee meeting was held with the Remodeling and Refurbishing committee with the purpose to recommend a sanctuary project in the amount of $14,577.40 The Remodel Committee Members were: James Goold, George Myers, Dean Moser, J.K Prather and Don Steidinger. Again very little information is available from 1969-1974.
April 18, 1974, the fund raising program was re-visited. After a ten year study, the Long-range Planning Committee projects costs could reach $119,000. The fundraising goal was set at $125,000 to be raised over a three-year period. This Building Committee Members were: Everett Sutter, Chairman, James Goold, Mrs. Dean Moser, Mr. C.C. Thompson and Mrs. Earl Voigt, Rev. Delmar Smith was the presiding minister at this time.
January 17, 1975, the Trustees requested that the entire sanctuary, stairway and balcony to be covered in carpet. December 1975 began this fundraising project. February 6, 1975. Architects reviewed replacing all the carpet in the sanctuary, by February 11, 1975. The congregational vote was held on the issue of carpeting with approval for the carpeting.
September 29, 1976, the building project was completed. The total cost $146,000. Total money received $123,000, leaving outstanding pledges at $10,000 and the amount owed over pledges at $15,000. Building Finance Committee Si Moser, Chairman, Carl Borngasser, Harvey Traub, Henry Bull, Robert Walter, Jr., Roy Taylor, Dick Anderson, Roy Melvin, C.C. Thompson, Mark Horner and Raymond Mishler , Henry Bull, and Jerry Schahrer represented the Administrative Board with Rev. Delmar Smith, minister.

1961 – THE METHODIST FELLOWSHIP BUILDING

Dedication Sunday was February 26, 1961, the second Sunday in Lent, with the sermon by Bishop Edwin E. Voigt, local minister was Rev. Roy Goodell, with Rev. William C. Jones, minister during planning and construction periods, Organist Mrs. James Goold, Choir Directors Mrs. E. F. Dickey and Mr. Stanley Weeks.
1965, the church parsonage was built. First occupied by Rev. and Mrs. Richard Brinkman and two daughters.
August 29, 2000 , twenty-five years after the last significant building took place, a Renovation Advisory Board was appointed. Patty Hofmann, Jim Munz, Delmar Smith and Jim Tipton. This board was created to evaluate, direct and oversee the upcoming renovation of the First United Methodist Church building in Fairbury, Illinois. In an effort to help streamline the often laborious task of directing a project of this size through internal committees, the board was given the authority to evaluate the needs of the project and prepare a construction plan, project estimate, and projected time frame. They kept the congregation and Church directors appraised of the efforts and used the unique skills of many in

the congregation to assist with various tasks. Funding for this project came from the many sources of the church including contributions from the congregation. Members of the Board of Trustees: Jerry Schahrer, Lois Coleman, Dean Moser, Richard Schaffer, George Myers, Sam Schmidgall, Ted Doran, Ray Mishler, Patty Hofmann, Rev. Stan Rapp, minister. Completion is nearly complete at this writing.(2/8/04)
(This information was gleaned from letters, committee notes and reports of Jim Tipton.)

THE PARSONAGE....1965

Quoted from the pamphlet published at the open house .
THE STORY OF OUR PASTOR'S HOME
On September 18, 1965, Rev. and Mrs. H. Brinkman and their two daughters moved into the new Methodist Parsonage at 206 East Maple Street in Fairbury,
"No intensive research was done to determine the exact history of the previous parsonage. No present member of our congregation has laid claim to helping build it, or move it to the site from which it was demolished this year. For a number of years, committees by various names have been reporting that the old house was not substantial enough to warrant improving it."
Finally in the autumn of 1964, a Parsonage Committee reported to the Official Board that they recommended replacing the parsonage, but made no specific suggestion of a house to buy or a specific lot on which to build.
On November 9, 1964, a special session of the Quarterly Conference was called and at that meeting a seven member committee was elected with instructions to secure a new parsonage, and to develop office space for the pastor, his secretary and the Sunday School Superintendent. Members of the committee elected were Mrs. Charles Holforty, Mrs. Robert Ficklin, Donald Steidinger, Roy Melvin, Si Moser, C. C. Thompson and A. Keith Anderson. By March 8 this committee submitted a proposal to the Congregational meeting which voted 53-21 in favor of removing the old parsonage and building a two-story house on the present site. Final plans were submitted to the Quarterly Conference and accepted on April 12, 1965. These plans included a budget of $40,000 for the total job assigned to the committee.
The Brinkman family moved into a rental house on April 23. On April 28 the old parsonage was demolished after attempts to sell it had failed. A full-time employee went on the job on May 1. The new home was occupied on September 18. Some very minor work remains to be completed. The Congregation has been very generous., Pledges total approximately $44,000. Cash - $32,718.51."

A COMMUNITY REPORT OF FUMC
(undated)

The church is very actively involved with many community groups and programs:
Prairie Farmers 4-H group (100 members) meetings, Cub Scout Pack 172 weekly meetings, Webelo's Boy Scout Troops, Girl Scouts Centrillo Council, Community Brass Ensemble. The Community Brass Ensemble also use the building. The Methodist Church is the center for the yearly canned food drive and serves as the community food pantry. Weddings and funerals are held at the church averaging about 12 –15 per year. The church outreach program is very active in local, state, national and world assistance. (author unknown.)

PASTORS OF THE FAIRBURY METHODIST CHURCH

1857 -W. J. Stubbles
1858 - W. A. Presson
1859 - B. P. Wheet and
E. H. Penfield
1860-61 - J. Grundy
1862 - S. B. Baker
1963-64 – J.G. Evans
1865 - J. E. Rutledge
1866 1866/67/68 – S.G. Havermale
1869/70 - W.C. Knapp
1871/72 - William Watson
1873 - R.G. Pearce
1874 - W. P. Graves
1875/76 - R. B. Williams
1877 – John Wilkinson
1878/79 – F. Havermale
1880 – W. B. Baker
1881/82 - E. S. Wilson
1883 - J. W. Haney
1884 - R. Crewes
1885 - W. McPheeters
1886 1886 - G. R. Palmer
1887/88 - R. B. Williams
1889/90 - Ed. Wasmuth
1891/92/93 - L. F. Cullom
1894/95/96/97/98 -
E. S. Wilson
1899/1990 - M. A. Head

1901/02/03/04/05/06 –
J. A. Johnson
1907/08/09 - M. V. Crumbaker
1910/11/12 - A. Wirt Lowther
1913 - Gideon L. Powell
1914/15/16 - S. A. Chapman
1917/18/19/20 - George Thorpe
1921/22/23/24 - D. F. Wilson
1925/26/27/28 - John V. Kennedy
1929/30/31/32/33 - M.B. VanLear
1934/35/ - Virgil Thompson
1936/37/38 – R. E. Buford
1939/40 - M. L O'Harra
1941/42/43/44 - L. R. Tagg
1945/46/47/48/49 - C. L. Shult (Died June 5, 1949)
1949/50/51/52/53/54 - Cecil Lockard 1955, deceased.
W.C. Jones –1955 – 1960, deceased.
Roy Goodell – 1960-1964, deceased.
Richard Brinkman – 1964-1968, deceased.
George Russell- 1968-1974
Delmar Smith- 1974-1979
Prospier Tournear- 1979-1981
David Deal- 1981-1989
Richard Mick- 1989-1991
Stanley Rapp- 1991-2001
Max Borah- 2001- present

The Fairbury Methodist Church had twenty-six pastors during its first 46 years: 1857 -1903. The longest service by one pastor was Revered E. S. Wilson whose two terms covered 7 years and 4 months. He was transferred here from the West Virginia Conference.
"Brother Baker was taken sick on the way to his appointment from conference and died in Chenoa, November 13, 1862. His body was interred in the Fairbury (Graceland) cemetery where a monument erected to his memory. Brother Baker was the first man appointed to Fairbury after it became a separate charge or station."
Reverend M. L O'Harra retired from here.
Reverend R. E. Buford has retired and the Methodist congregation is most happy that he and Mrs. Buford have returned to Fairbury to make their home. They first came to Fairbury from Sheldon in 1936 and went from here to the First Methodist Church at Pekin in 1939. During those three years, Reverend Buford took in eighty-five members; and it was during a period when the entire country was still feeling the effects of the Depression. Church contributions, everywhere had suffered greatly, nevertheless under Reverend Buford's guidance, the Fairbury church was one of three in the entire Illinois Conference that paid all its commitments in full each of the three years he was here.
Reverend Carrol Shult died while serving his charge at Fairbury. He was taken with a stroke while making a pastoral call and died three days later, June 5, 1949 aged 50 years. He was born May 6, 1897 at Hillsdale, Illinois, the son of Reverend Frank E. and Hettie Belle. He attended Aledo High School and the William and Vashti College in Aledo, studied two years at Hedding College in Abingdon, Illinois and received his B.S. degree from Northwestern and his Doctor of Divinity from Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois. He married Miss Doris Pease of Burgess, Illinois December 21, 1922 and became a member of the Central Illinois Conference in 1923. He came to Fairbury in 1945. For several years, he was secretary of the Committee on Ministerial Qualifications for the Illinois Conference and at the time of his death he had been a member of the Conference Board of Education and was Director of Religious Education for the Bloomington District. Surviving him are his wife, three sons Earnest, Dale and Donald and three daughters Mrs. Earl Hancock of Northbrook, Mrs. Charles T. Jackson of Kalamazoo, Michigan and Mrs. Tom Carter of Fairbury.

EARLY ORGANIZATIONS AND REVIVALS

The Fairbury church remained an appointment and part of the Avoca Circuit until 1863 when it was made a separate charge. There have been four different charges or Conference appointments in this vicinity:
Fairbury Circuit – 1862 – 1875
Fairbury Circuit – North 1866
Fairbury Circuit – South 1866
Fairbury Station – 1863.
All these appointments were closely related to Methodism in Fairbury and vicinity.
Between the services conducted by the Circuit Rider preacher, the congregation for convenience, was divided into neighborhoods with "Class Leaders", who conducted the worship service in the absence of the pastor. There were nine Class Leaders in the Circuit. John Mill McDowell taught one class at the Avoca church, and Robert Chambers the second. John Kring, St. taught the first class at the Fairbury church, and Jacob Hunt the second. Fran Smith at Indian Grove, James Tanner at the

Tanner Schoolhouse, Robert Moore at his schoolhouse, D. L. Crum at the Fair Review Schoolhouse and Grace Willson at Tucker's Schoolhouse. The latter was cut off to the Chatsworth Circuit.

These classes were all united in the Avoca Circuit, and the Circuit in turn belonged to a District headed by the Presiding Elder.

In the early days of the Fairbury church, the Presiding Elder was "not" selected because of his executive work, but for his "spiritual-mindedness, preaching ability and evangelistic zeal."

It was his duty to preside over the Quarterly Meeting. This meeting, which included the entire Circuit was held in the various member churches and lasted for several days.

It was felt that " it was harder for a Methodist to backslide when he had the privilege of an old fashioned Quarterly Meeting four times a year."

Their "Love Feasts" in the early days of the Methodist Church were testimonial meetings to which only the loyal faithful members of the church were invited. Bread and water were passed in commemoration of their Common Brotherhood.

After the Love Feast was the preaching, followed by Communion.

At the time of the Fairbury church, it had come to meaning testimony elsewhere. At this church it developed into a meeting after the regular sermon. This service never lasted more than fifteen minutes. They gave the favorite Bible verses and suggestions for the church future changes and growth.

Revival Meetings were frequent. Protracted Meetings were held by every Methodist preacher at every preaching place in the Circuit, usually in the winter when the attention of the congregation was undivided and they lasted two weeks or longer if the interest required. Intended primarily for the conversion of sinners, the Revival also included singing and the reviving and refreshing of the members.

A "Basket Meeting", on the other hand, lasted only one day and they took their dinners with them in a basket.

With the turn of the century, the revivals began to lose attention. In 1905, during February, the Methodists had a month's revival meetings under the leadership of the noted evangelists, Hart and Magann, and in 1914 they joined with the other Protestant churches to bring the Honeywell revival team to Fairbury. A large Tabernacle was built on the site of the old Thomas House, complete with sawdust in the aisles and one of the outstanding attractions of the service was the great choir composed of members from the local churches. Dr. Honeywell was up to-the-minute in his approach to his audience and he believed in letting people know he was in town. One day during the services, there was a parade down Main Street (Locust) of small boys dressed to represent the various nations, and each carried a placard to advertise the revival services.

One minor outcome of these Union Revival services was the church series baseball games the following summer. The boy's teams from the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Christian churches played some fine games, which were enthusiastically attended.

Every community developed during the Civil War and Reconstruction periods had its full share of rowdies. The point of difference with Fairbury was that it was the more richly endowed.

Every preacher expected disturbances during his sermons that stretched for hours. Bean shooters and window pane tapping were merely commonplace. Revival services anywhere received the earnest attentions of young drunks. Stones and clods were flung through the open windows in summer and red pepper (very effective form of tea gas) was poured on the tops of heating stoves in winter. Frequently, the services were broken up with just plain noise. To be a successful preacher, one needed a quick wit and a strong arm.

Fairbury, however, was known far and wide for its young hooligans who lurked in the dark alleys and struck down unsuspecting pedestrians from behind. Ministers of the cloth, intent upon their Quarterly meetings were no exception.

At first, a convenient length of hose was used to stun the victim, but soon a more efficient weapon was developed. It became known as the "stuffed club" and it was widely used in Fairbury among after-theater crowds and Saturday night shoppers. The victims were so numerous that when a club was finally captured and put on exhibition at *the Blade* office, it drew crowds eager to inspect it.

It proved to be a canvas sack six inches in diameter and twelve inches long. It was tightly stuffed with excelsior and coarse salt. This was tied to a stick two feet long. As a weapon it had range, weight and flexibility and quite easily knocked a man unconscious. Those bad boys and angry young folks became very mindful of the dangers of a stuffed club.

Anyone attending Quarterly Conference in Fairbury learned to be unusually wary, least they

get on the wrong side of anyone with one of the clubs. Duriing the 1890's, a few well-placed arrests finally helped stop the fights. But the exasperated Village Fathers ended the rest of the trouble and some fighting with an Ordinance providing a $25.00 fine for anyone maliciously disturbing a church service

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SOCIABLES

Now the early Methodists stood strongly against every variety of dancing and card playing. Instead every effort was made to provide "harmless entertainment" for both children and adults. The most popular form of this was the "Sociables". They were held about once a month usually in the homes of the church members, and they speedily became a polite type of social warfare.

The beginnings of the socials were simple. For instance there was the "Carpet Ball Social" which was popular in the 1870's. Every lady brought a ball of "carpet rags" which were discarded pieces of cloth torn into strips and the ends sewed together for the weaving of the ever popular rag rugs and carpets. In the core of her ball, the lady put her name. During the evening, all the balls were auctioned off to the gentlemen, who unwound them to discover their partners and "escort them in to a supper of oysters, hot coffee and cake".

The socials became a gauge of social standing and in order for *The Blade* to report that "the elegant parlors were crowded" it soon was necessary to provide something unique to intrigue the interest of the fickle public. Mrs. Frances McDowell held an "Avoirdupois Social", the John Virgins, a " Peanut" social. The invitations for the latter were sent out in peanut shells tied with ribbons.

The Davy Sharps held a "Pink T". There were hammocks under the trees for this one, and the lawn was bright with torch lights. The meaning of the "T" became evident with the elaborate letter T cut from pink cardboard and carefully inserted into each dish of ice cream.

(A torch it should be explained was a covered iron cup with a wick in it and it held whale oil. At sociables and lawn parties, it was tied to a stick with desired length and stuck in the ground for illumination.)

They had Pie Socials and Oyster Socials.

In Fairbury, oysters came in tall cans and were popular both fried and in soup. Occasionally at an extremely "researched" affair, a prankster would slip in a rubber oyster to disconcert the fastidious.

Dominys gave a "Corn Social" and the menu for this was advertised beforehand because it was for the benefit of the parsonage fund:

"Corn hulled with milk, Corn mush with milk, Corn Bread, Corn Starch cake, Corned beef, Sweet corn, Corn popped, Corn Starch blanc mange, Coffee". The Epworth League likewise raised money with a "Lemon Squeeze" held at Maple's Hall: The menu – Lemonade, Lemon wafers, Potatoes Hotel de Maitre, Lemon Charlotte Russe – Lemon Jelly, Lemon Carmel cake and Lemon Pie. Lemon Jelly cake – meats and celery pickles and slaw. Lemon Ice 10 cents extra. A program will be given.

In season, the strawberry and ice cream socials were tremendously popular. Sometimes these became "Promenade Festivals" and were held at the Opera House. The little tables for those partaking of the refreshments were set in the middle of the floor and they were waited upon by the prettiest girls wearing their prettiest aprons. The space around the walls was reserved for the Promenade. These people who walked elegantly about and conversed with their friends. For the Pound Sociable, the friends called between the hours of 3 and 10 p.m. and left a package. One totaled tea, coffee, sugar, rice, meat, butter and beans. Dried fruits, canned fruits, crackers, soap, starch. dry goods and some money. Such donations were used to help an impoverished family or their own underpaid minister.

By 1905, however, all this progression of Sociables to raise money for church purposes had demoralized the congregation. The women were exhausted with the housecleaning and cooking involved and the men's stomachs could endure no more. In September of that year, a Conference was held of the Illinois Methodist Episcopal and resolutions were adopted. denouncing church sociables for revenue in favor of "good plain tithing."

OLD FOLKS DINNERS

The pioneer settlers of the vicinity were always eager for reunions and they early formed an Old Settlers Society. Anyone who had lived here 15 years or more was eligible for membership. The Fairbury Fair featured a special day for them, complete with a log cabin for their enjoyment, and for some years the Methodist Old Folks Dinners were major social events.

There was a bond of affection among the early settlers that is completely incomprehensible today. The loneliness they had endured together, the homesickness, the bitter day-to-day struggle with raw nature to make a simple living created a community of feeling that endured until death. Together they had put up each other's houses and barns; together they had helped each other in the fields and homes. Together they assisted at the births; celebrated the weddings, nursed the sick and buried their dead.

When death occurred to a Methodist member, it was a team from the church that came to wash and dress the corpse for burial. If a Brother, the team was composed of men, for a Sister of women. This custom was still in observance in 1910.

For the survivors, the church members cared for livestock and crops, attended to the households and adopted the orphans into their own families.

One of the most successful of the Old Folks Dinners was given August 26, 1904 in their new church. The Epworth League, under the supervision of the Mercy and Help department entertained the old members of the church and congregation to the number of about sixty persons. The special guests of the day were fifty-four men and women whose combined ages amounted to the astonishing number of three thousand, nine hundred and twenty-nine years. (3929). The average age was found to be but a slight fraction below seventy-three years. It was indeed a notable gathering of the old saints of Fairbury. Only about two thirds of those invited were able to attend because of sickness or the infirmities of age.

About ten o'clock in the morning, they were brought to church in carriages provided by the League, and the morning hours till noon were spent in social converse and visiting. They were busy refreshing each other's memory of the great events and happenings of thirty, forty and fifty years. At noon, they were invited to repair to the parlors of the church, where the young people of the church had prepared for them a splendid chicken dinner with all the usual accompaniments with ice cream and cake for dessert.

After dinner, they looked through the new church and resumed their visiting. At two o'clock, they were seated in the auditorium and were entertained for a short while by Miss Olive McKee and Miss Fern Swarm. This was followed by the old people singing some of the old hymns of the church, a short address by the pastor and closing with an old-fashioned class meeting in which many of them took part. At four o'clock their pictures were taken in front of the church, after which they were taken to their homes in carriages. Thus closed a notable and most enjoyable day for the old people

The young people of the Methodist church are to be commended for these thoughtful and kindly ministrations. Our old people served well at our hands.

Following are the names of those present: Mrs. David Sharp, Mrs.. Swazze, Mrs. Susan Baker, Mrs. Mitilda Veach, Mrs. Rauch, Mrs. Ellen Catton, Mrs. Nancy Town, Mrs. M. E. Davis, Mrs. J. Lowe, Mrs. Jane Townsey, Mrs. E. S. Wilson, Mrs. Matheny, Mrs. H.H. Gravina, Mrs. George Coshorn, Mrs. T. A. Beach, Mrs. Curl, Mrs. W. H. Taylor, Mrs. Jane Dawson, Mrs. M.C. Crouch. Mrs. Harriett Hailton, Mrs. C. Powell, Mrs. David Wringt. Mrs. M. J. Carman, Mrs. J. Kring, Mrs. E. J. Hurdle, Mrs. C. R. Sims, Mrs. Lucinda Williams, Mrs. Pflaat, Mrs. J. L. Moore, Mrs. H. A. Baulor, Mrs. J.W. Harold, Mrs. S. R. Crull, Mrs., I.V. Rose, Mrs. Lamina Pool, Mrs. M.D. Street, Mrs. G. L. Killbury, Mrs. Mary Westervelt, Mrs. Lucinda Cook, Messrs, T. A. Beach, James Kirby, David Sharp, J. Kring, J.S. Rariden, C. B. Ostrander, J. Lowe, A. F. Filley, J. B. Lawrence, Geo. Goshorn, T. C. Lawrence, E. Marsh, H.C. Ravenscroft, Geo. Goshorn, T. C. Davis, S. Dancy, Hugh McKee and A.R. Matheny and W. Dever.

THE METHODIST SUNDAY SCHOOL

Less than a year after the Methodist Society of Fairbury was founded, they established a Sunday School. Mr. N.E. Lyman was the Superintendent and the prospect was an immediate and outstanding success.

The other churches of the two in the community started Sunday Schools too, and since their hours of services varied, one enterprising group of Methodist girls discovered it was possible to attend all three. They thus alleviated, in no small way the boredom of the Blue Sundays observed at that time.

First, the girls went to the Baptist Sunday School, and then came back over to the Methodist church for the preaching services. At twelve o'clock they walked over to the Presbyterian Sunday School.

After which they all went home to dinner. At 2:30 P.M., they were present when the Methodist Sunday School convened and they

went back there again in the evening for preaching services.
The 1887 schedule of Methodist Services facilitated this:

Preaching – 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Class meeting - 12 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School 2:30 P.M.
Prayer Meeting – Wednesday evenings
Young People's Meeting (No time given)
Women's Foreign Missionary Society – 2:30 P.M. the last Thursday of the month.
Choir Meeting – Friday evening

Not long after the erection of the third Methodist church, Smith Olney became the Superintendent of that Sunday School, serving for a period of nearly twenty years. Under his watchful eye, their first concerts were presented to packed audiences. The first Mrs. Dr. Brewer, an accomplished musician, drilled the children and led them in the performance of songs, recitations, essays and dialogues.
In the summer, time they held a Sunday School picnic and took the children out to nearby woods on hayracks. July 14, 1885, "several hundred children went to Taylor's Grove where they had swings and croquet sets. They took their own dinners, but had free lemonade. The Juvenile Band furnished the music."
During the winter, there was the excitement of the Christmas entertainment. In 1878 *The Blade* carried an announcement: "The Christmas service at the M.E. Church will consist of 'Christmas Chimes' and a tree with presents for the children. Parents will be expected to furnish presents for their own children, as far as possible. Everybody is invited to use the tree as a medium to make presents to their friends. A competent committee will have charge of all articles left with them."
(Their Christmas tree, of course was lit by little wax candles and hung with popcorn strings and cookies.)
In 1881, at their Christmas Exercises, there was "a huge elephant drawing a handsomely decorated passenger car that came from behind a curtain. Santa was on top of the car holding the lines driving the elephant. Inside the car were fifteen little girls in white with blue sashes and gold cornets. On the breast of each was a gold letter spelling Merry Christmas. They sang carols and distributed gifts."
The program of 1887, however, might have been a tragedy. "The Christmas doings at the various churches were very successfully carried out, with the exception of a slight mishap at the M.E. This edifice was well-filled, and the presents handsomely arranged on a structure representing a cabin, this latter being covered with cotton in representation of snow. After the exercises, and during the distribution of presents, the cotton unfortunately took fires from a burning taper and in an instant the entire structure was in flames. Prompt action, however, saved the presents and prevented any serious damage to the church. Several window lights were broken and, of course, the carpets and furniture were somewhat soiled. The occupants of the church, as soon as the fire started, made a rush to get out, which was accomplished without anyone sustaining serious injury."
"In 1893, the Methodist program drew an enormous crowd." Logan Kring was St. Nick and Lilly Churchill presided at the organ.
1899 found members still filled with patriotism from the Spanish-American War. Admission was to be ten cents. "A beautiful battleship will be one of the novel features of the entertainment. It will sail into the audience loaded with luxuries for the little ones."
For year around interest, they maintained a thriving lending library for the children. (This was before the Dominy Memorial Library was presented to the city.)
Book Socials were held at Maple's Opera House and cleared $21.00 for the new books.
Later – about the time of the First World War – they had a rousing Sunday School Orchestra. Logan Kring, who played the trombone in it, was the leader.
Sunday School has been a vital part of FUMC every year. Today, Sunday School begins with a pre-school /nursery school-age student and continues into adult years. Many wonderfully dedicated teachers are remembered: Logan & Neva Wilson, Kay Dickey, Hazel Kilgus, Lois Zimmerman, Barb Zimmerman, Beth Marshall, Donna Marshall, Sheryl Atkins, Becky Webster, Jim and Shelley Schahrer, Sara Sands, Joyce Crews, Kati Kaisner, Katie Metz, Greta Aupperle, Wayne and Sharon Kurth, Bill and Lorna Winn, Delmar and Cathy Smith, Carol Aberle, Ruth Ann Kohlmann, Calvin Jackson, Dale Atkins, Nick Pick, Joan and Jim Hammond, Alice Ferguson, Rubye Russell, Cheryl Smith, Bob Walters, Lucille Moser, Robin McPherson, Linda Mack, Florence Day, Cathy Cook, Pam Aberle, Susan Myers, Norine Mowery, Peggy Metz, Steve and Sherri Metz, Judy Kirchner, Doug and Linda Zick, Sally Schauble, Kay Rich, Randy Lane, Joyce Crews, Sara Stiver, Donna Sands and many many others. Hazel Green Kilgus was one of the longest- termed teachers

in Sunday School, who was kindly assisted by Lois Zimmerman, who later also served a long term in Children's Sunday School.

CHRISTIAN BUILDERS CLASS

A Sunday School class, which consisted of a group of married couples, began in 1949 or 1950. These faithful members held money-raising events such as pancake dinners and a food tent at the Fairbury Fair with all the proceeds going to help the building of the Fellowship Building. Teachers of the class were Alma Lewis James and Neva and Logan Wilson. This group also held monthly family potlucks in the homes of members with all the children attending which made quite a large gathering. If any members of the class were moving, the members of the class would plan a day when all could come in with paint brushes and wall paper equipment, or whatever was needed, to get the home ready for the movers.
Some of the members were: Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Deputy, Mr. and Mrs. Wynn Deputy, Mr. and Mrs Lloyd Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Newnam, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Ahring, Mr.and Mrs. Ray Mishler, Mr. and Mrs. Olan Bounds, Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Abrahamson, Mr. and Mrs. Eldon Askew, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Atkins, , Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Denker, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Mowery, Mr. and Mrs. Merle Vansickle, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Todd, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan Horine, Mr. and Mrs. George Myers, and guests Mrs. Catherine Hamilton and Mrs. Kay Dickey. Rev. Cecil Lockard, was the pastor at this time.

HOPEWELL CLASS
An older ladies Sunday School class was called the Hopewell Class. Elsie Newnam taught the class for over fifty years.

MEN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

The men of the church held a Sunday School class independently in the early years of the church. This class was taught by Mr. John Wagenseller.

OPTIMIST CLASS

Another ladies Sunday School class was called The Optimist Class which was also held both in the church and within the members homes depending on the event. No names or dates are available to include in this history.

A special Sunday School class was held in the Tower Room of the main church for a number of years. First taught by Logan Wilson, later, Calvin Jackson, Dale Atkins, Cheryl Smith and others. The class was so unique that those that attended were accommodated with a baby crib in the room as the need presented itself. The members became so close that they not only studied various parts of the Bible, they also shared life's problems and goodness. It was a crowded, often stuffy room that some how inspired and truly radiated the purpose of Bible study and prayer.
Only a few lists of Sunday School officers are available now, but in 1909 the Superintendent was Mr. H. H. Shover. Assistant Superintendent , Mrs. I.I. Reynolds, Secretary Dora Thornton, Treasurer Nellie Goshorn, Organist, Fred Brethard, Chorister C.W. Neitz, Librarians Josie Patton and Mrs.. Zella Baker, and Class Librarians Bessie Bethard and Edith Mitten.
In 1894 the Superintendent was Mr. W.W. Wonser Assistant Superintendent, G.C. Lewis, Secretary Ida Crull, Treasurer Edna Ross, Librarians, Vinna Earnheart, Jessie Blakesley, Carrie Harn, Chorister Logan Kring, Assistant Chorister Orra Phillips, Organist Deane Earnheart, Artist Pearl Moats, Assistant Artist Henry Schwab.
Other Sunday School Superintendents have been Mrs. Logan Kring, Mrs. Harry Reynolds, Henry Schade, Grey Scott and Roy Melvin. I. H. Shover served in 1903. Andrew Steidinger 1940, Keith Anderson 1942, Mrs., Debold Householder 1945 – 1950. Wayne Newnam, Phil Hotaling 1950-1951, Clifford Denker, 1957. And Mr. Ray Mishler, Mrs. Todd Webster And presently Mrs Charles McKeon.
Adult Sunday School is lead by Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hammond with some prior leaders having been Dr. Calvin Jackson, Larry Steidinger and Nick Pick.

THE CHOIR

Always, one of the highlights of the Methodist preaching services was the music by their choir. In 1887, the members were Edna Barnes, Ora Phillips, Nettie Lough, Ida Mahoney, Laura Houseworth, William Skinner, Harry Amsbary and L. J. Pfaat. Charlie Neitz was the leader and Mabel Rogers the Organist.
Logan Kring was a faithful member of the choir for 52 years until his failing eyesight compelled him to give it up.

From the early days of the Fairbury church, the Methodist children have been organized into a choir of their own, and this program has grown into the present four groups:
The Cherubs (boys and girls of the first four grades of school. Number 33.)
The Seraphs are 28 girls in grades 5 to 8 The Choristers are 16 boys in grades 5-8.
The Chapel Singers are 13 high school boys and girls.
In addition to these are the Wesleyana Singers (13 women's voices only) and the Chancel Choir (composed of 20 mixed voices.)
Each Choir practices weekly and the directors include 6 volunteers and one paid director The practice sessions of the younger children have become especially popular because of the suppers served them afterwards by the members of the Wesleyana Circle. The church is exceptionally fortunate in its accomplished and talented Music Committee: Mrs. E. F. Dickey, Mrs. Curtis Weeks, Mrs., Logan Wilson, Mrs. Everett Sutter, Mrs. Harley Bedell, Mrs. Keith Anderson, Mrs. Charles Veatch Jr., Mrs. James Goold and Stanley Weeks. For many years the Choir was accompanied by Mrs. Jim Goold, later her daughter Mrs. Paul Hostetter, presently Mrs. Jeff Schweizer. Some of the singers from the past in the Choir are: Mrs. Jean Sutter, Mrs. Mildred Miller, Mrs. Liz Askew, Mrs. Lucille Moser, Mrs. Kathy Honegger, Mr. Stan Weeks, Mr. Gordon Sands, Mr. Jim Hammond, Mrs. Karen Hildreth, Miss Kelly Schmidgall, Miss Sara Sands, Mr. Ira Grandon, Mrs. Robin McPherson, Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Schahrer, Mrs. Peggy Metz, Mr. and Mrs. Steve Metz, Mrs. Janet Webel.
Present Chancel Choir members are: Janet Aberle, Mary Lou Besgrove, Janice Friedman, Kara Friedman, Donna Sands, Shelley Schahrer, Patty Borah, Jim Schahrer, Jeff Schweizer and Delmar Smith.

THE ORGANISTS

No written records are available, but memories of several kind people of the present church inform this writer that they recall: Marie Bedell, Margery Weeks, Kay Dickey, Virginia Anderson, Jean Goold, Sarah Goold, Denise Brown and Beth Schweizer as having served as organists of the First United Methodist Church.

THE PASTOR'S AID SOCIETY

"The members of the church met February 20, 1887, following a previous notice for the purpose of forming a society in the interest of the M.E. Church."
Reverend Palmer, pastor, called the meeting to order and read the constitution, by-laws and pledges that had been written. They were adopted as read. The name of the Society was to be known as the Pastor's Aid Society and the following officers were elected: President Mrs. J.R. Stillwell, Vice Mrs. J. W. Walton, Secretary Mrs. H.J. Stafford, and Treasurer Mrs. H. J. Ramsey. There were managers and assistants appointed for each quarter of the town to call on members and newcomers and take care of any work to be done. Various entertainment, dinners, teas and socials were given to raise money. On December 28, 1909, the ladies gave $500.00 to the pipe organ fund. The organ was purchased and installed in 1910. It was dedicated that same year with an organ recital by a member of the city.
The Pastor's Aid Society became a committee from the W.S.C.S. to assist with the pastoral calls, and three of their members were appointed from each quarter of town. This committee has fallen into disuse.

THE LADIES AID

In 1903, the Ladies Aid and the following officers: President Mrs. H. J. Ramsey, Vice President, Mrs. T.S. O. McDowell, Secretary Mrs. Pearl Hawk, Treasurer, Mrs. J.P. Mitten. Other presidents were: Mrs. Dora Bennett, Mrs., Lottie Householder and Mrs, Edith Steidinger, 1938-39 Mrs. Sue Lange held office in 1939-40.

THE WOMEN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Women's Foreign Missionary Society was organized shortly before 1887. It is listed in the brochure of that date as meeting the last Thursday of each month at 2:30 P.M. Their minutes book of 1899 gives the following officers: President Mrs. Samuel Dancey, First Vice President Mrs. E. S. Wilson, Second Vice President Mrs. L.B. Dominy, Recording Secretary Mrs. C. E. Patmore, Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Carter, Treasure Mrs. H.A. Presler. Mite Box Superintendents: Mrs. James Carter, Mrs. Wright.
The next April their book contained a notation: "The Society forgot to have any meeting at all – too bus about housecleaning."

The 1903 officers were: President Mrs. JA Johnson, Vice President Mrs. E.S. Wilson, Mrs. James Kirby and Mrs. F. M. Patton, Recording Secretary Mrs. C. E., Patter, Corresponding Secretary Mrs., Isaac Walton, Mite Box Secretaries Mrs. G. C. Lewis and Mrs., George Day. Treasurer Mrs. AL McKee. Mrs. G. C. Lewis was the president of the local society for a number of years, and she was also the W.F.M.S. president of the Kankakee District. It was through her and her husband Dr. G. C. Lewis that the society supported two medical missionaries. The first was Miss Eva A. Gregg R.N. who became a personal friend of the Lewis family. She went to China in 1912 and for many years she was Superintendent of the Isabella Fisher Hospital. By her efforts, the Ella Home was built for the nurses, so named in honor of Ella Gregg, her mother and Ella Lewis.

The second medical missionary was Dr. Alexander Kemp. He and his wife were sent to Quessua, Angola, Africa, in 1923. Under his care were a hospital and clinic, a school for girls and a boy's school, which had both agricultural and industrial departments.

The pride of the Society, however, was their very own Missionary Miss Fern Carter, who went to India. Her grandmother Mrs. James Carter and her mother Mrs. Mollie Carter, both were faithful devoted workers in the Society for many years. The latter served as president.

Fern was born on a farm near Wing, Illinois, March 4, 1900, the oldest of three children, a brother and sister. In 1903 the family moved to a 320-acre farm south of Thawville, attending the church and Sunday School there, and she joined the church there when 13 years old.

She attended the Veatch School, District 197, Iroquois County, until 8th grade when the family moved to Fairbury. She graduated from the Fairbury High School in 1918, attended Illinois State Normal University for two summers, graduated from the University of Illinois in 1925 with a B.A. degree and attended the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1934. Following this, she taught her Sister Ann's school while she went to college.

In January 1928, Fern sailed for India, going by way of England. She was the manager of the Boarding Department of the girl's school there, which had 200 pupils from the first grade through high school. Fern taught in the high school, and was the adviser for the local Women's Missionary and Temperance Society, and the Epworth League.

Returning to the States in March, 1933 she went back again to India in 1934. This time she was appointed to the District Evangelistic and Educational Work at Nadiad, India, but she had served only a little over a year when she was stricken with polio.

Since that time, Fern had devoted her efforts to the Fairbury church, and her wheel chair became a center dynamo of saintly power. She was beloved and cherished by everyone of the congregation.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETIES

There was a Young People's Missionary Society, of course, for both boys and girls. Clarence Dexter was President; Roy Robinson was secretary and Bertha Chapman Treasurer. Later, after the boys had lost all interest, the girl's societies took over. The Standard Bearers and Junior Kings Heralds were organized and thrived.

WOMEN'S HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Women's Home Missionary Society devoted its efforts to the Cunningham Home, children's institution at Urbana, Illinois, and the Langleyville Settlement House at Langleyville, Illinois.

It was a large organization and the attendance averaged 75 to 80 at every meeting. Some of the presidents were Mrs. Charles Day, Mrs. Jessie Love, Mrs. Melvin Anderson, Mrs. O,L Veatch, Mrs. Ralph Deputy and Mrs. Will Henning. Mrs. Elmer Bailey was the last of their presidents before the reorganization. She took office in 1935.

They also had an associate society for children, the Mission Band. In 1903, Eva Barnes was President, Mamie Westervelt and Erma Neitz, Vice Presidents, Lillian Hassenfratz, secretary, Lawrence Wilson , Treasurer. Later this became the Queen Esther (Maxine Lange was the 1940 President) and the Mothers Jewels for the younger children.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

In 1940, the entire Methodist church reorganized the groups within it. The Ladies Aid, the Pastor's Guide, the Women's Home Missionary Society and the Women's Foreign Missionary Society united to form the Women's Society of

Christian Service. Mrs. Jessie Love was the first President of the new organization taking office in 1940 and serving four years. Mrs. Walter Henning and Mrs. Harry Newman also served four years each successively; Mrs. Lester Pearson in 1951, Mrs. E.M. Gerdes 1953, Mrs.. Hugh Vansickle, 1956 and Mrs. Edgar Runyon, 1957.
They have ninety-four members with an average attendance of thirty.
June 1960 Mrs. E. F. Dickey, Mrs. Roscoe Combes, Mrs. C. D. Ziegenhorn, Mrs. Keith Anderson and Miss Edith Mitten, representing the Fairbury Women's Society of Christian Service were in attendance at the School of Missions and Christian Service at Illinois Wesleyan University. The program included the study of the Book of Acts, classes were held On "Heritage and Horizons in Home Missions and Into All the World Together: Alcohol and Christian Responsibility and Basic Christian Beliefs.

WESLEYANA CIRCLE

The Wesleyana Circle is a junior branch of the W.S.C.S., composed of young mothers and working girls that are unable to attend afternoon meetings. The organized meetings began in 1950 with thirty-three members and grew to sixty, meeting the third Monday of the month in the homes of the members.
They sponsor the annual Mother and Daughter Banquets given near Mother's Day, help with the annual Chicken Pie Supper and furnish the help for one day a month at the Hospital Snack Bar. Help is also given to the church kitchen, such as the stainless steel ware, punch bowl and cups and films for the Sunday School.
Their chairmen have been: Betty Ficklin, 1950 Helen Streib, 1951, Marie Wessel, 1952, Eula Mae Veatch, 1953, Melba Wilson, 1954, Delorous Steidinger, 1955, Mary Arends, 1956 and Jan McNeil, 1957. Wesleyanna Circle continued under various chairpersons as an evening circle. The circle dissolved in the mid-1980's.

THE MEN'S BROTHERHOOD

A class of Methodist men met together as the Men's Brotherhood in 1940, with Phil Hotaling as their president. It has grown into what is now a chartered group of 35 members. They are known as the Methodist Men and meet regularly. Hartzell Horine was their president 1951, and Lloyd Woodward also held the office. In Later years, the Methodist Men have hosted Sunday morning breakfasts with not only great food, but special worship with missionaries . They also were the backbone of the Food Pantry and distribution for a number of years.
Some of those members were Calvin Jackson, Logan Wilson, Jim Goold, Ira Grandon, Dave Kilgus, George Myers, Gordon Sands, John Wink, Don Gray and Stan Weeks. Others in later years, but no record of names.

THE METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

From the very founding of the city, Literary Societies were extremely popular in Fairbury. Their members took themselves seriously in their search for culture, and so it was no astonishing thing that the Methodist boys and girls formed a Literary Society too. All of the members were about sixteen years old and they met at the various homes.
Sometimes for their programs they gave "Dialogues" or one act plays and one of these performances took place at the Filley residence. The dining room was used as the stage, the kitchen was the dressing room and their parents were jam-packed into the sitting room and parlor. Charlie Neitz led the singing and then they gave their play. From this literary Society, the Epworth League was organized in 1890. The members met at the church at 7 o'clock every Sunday evening,. Charlie Neitz was the first President and held office for over four years. By 1896, they had 150 members, and were reported to be in a flourishing condition. They gave frequent socials for various projects, one of which was a benefit for the Cubans. In 1903, the officers were as follows: President Ira McCullough, First Vice president, C.W. Neitz, Second vice president Ida Adams, Third Vice President Jennie Cliff and Fourth Vice president Elizabeth Neff. Secretary Charles Steinberg, Treasurer U.S. Swarm. May 5, 1909, the following officers were elected: President Charles Steinberg, First vice President Miss Mayme Westervelt, Second Vice president Charles Maunder, Third Vice President Miss Greta Shover, Fourth Vice President, Miss Edith Mitten, Secretary Harry Branvig, Treasurer Logan Kring, Organist Miss Mary Crumbaker, Assistant Organist is Fern Morton, Chorister Mr. Logan Kring. The last President of the Epworth League was Hugh Henning, 1940.
A Junior Epworth League, which met at 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, provided similar worship

for slightly younger group of children. In 1903, their officers were as follows: Superintendent Mrs. W. S. Perry, President Gertrude Shook, First Vice President Eva Barnes, Second Vice President Anna Ginther, Third Vice President Mayme Westervelt, Fourth Vice president Leona James, Secretary Bethel Zook, Treasurer Lawrence Wilson, Librarian Lillian Hassentratz, Chorister Erma Neitz.
About 1942, The Methodist Youth Fellowship was organized from the League members with Bette Newman as the first president, 1945 Marilyn Steidinger, 1947 Joan Kelson, 1951 Robert Cummins Jr. The 1957 president is Carol Melvin. The Youth Fellowship with an average attendance of eighteen, meets every Wednesday evening. Mr. Willis Shay and Mr. John McNeil are their Counselors.
It is known that the UMYF continued, but no formal information is available at this writing. During the years 1973 until 1980's, the UMYF was quite active under the Leadership of Rev. Brinkman, Judy & Lynn Dameron and Dale and Florence Dameron, and Harvey and Anna Mae Ahring. Regular meetings were held and annual trips to Washington D.C. and New Orleans were popular. Rev. George Russell and Donna Sands lead the group during the early seventies into 1980. The group became a large encompassing organization as they had youth members from at least three other churches joining together for fellowship and service. Work/Service trips were taken to South Carolina, Dulac, Louisanna,, Espanola, New Mexico and Kentucky.
Other adults assisting with trips were Gordon Sands, Henry Bull, Jim Goold, Margaret Wenger, Ray Timmons and Leroy Fagot.
During the 1980's to present, there has been active participation by the youth and their leaders in "Go and Serve" projects. Presently, the Sr. H.S. UMYF is under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Nick Pick with Ben Aberle the president. The Jr. H. S. UMYF is under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Delmar Smith .

ANOTHER GROUP

Mari Mates was a couples group within the church during the 1970's & 1980's. The group was made up of married couples in their 40's and had the sole purpose of fellowship among adult Christians. Activities included, but weren't limited to, social activities such as potlucks, dinner out, special programs, Valentine events, even a wedding vow renewal for some members. Some of the members were: Mr. & Mrs. John Hildreth, Mr. & Mrs. Walt Kohlman, Mr. & Mrs. Eli Aupperle, Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Aberle, Mtr.& Mrs. Keith Stiver, Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Sands, Mr. & Mrs. George Myers, Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Kurth, Mr. & Mrs. & Mrs. Keith Coleman, Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Schahrer, Mr. & Mrs. Everett Wenger Mr. & Mrs. Harold Vansickle, and other members but names were not available, due to loss of records.

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In closing, recall that we cannot measure the church growth and success in neatly dated segments, nor achievements attributed only to particular ministers and church leaders or eras. The success is often best measured over time in Praises to our Heavenly Father.

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The Blade, Microfilm/microfiche files, United Methodist Conference Office backfiles, Stuffed Clubs and Antimacassars, Boney's Hired Man,
Other collected papers and news clippings unidentified. Thanks to Mrs. Dorothy French for news articles, Mrs. Dorothy Denham, The Maurice Sutters, Mrs. Dean Moser, Mrs. Florence Day, Mrs. Ross Mowery, Mr. George Myers, The Board of Trustees Committee Members, (Jim Tipton, Karen Hildreth, Lori Maley, Sharon Kurth, Kathy Fogarty, Sam Schmidgall, Randy Lane and Jay McDonald) Rev. Borah and Mrs. Carol Vaughan.
Appreciation for the verbal history and photos of members of First United Methodist Church of Fairbury, Illinois. Mr. and Mrs. Roger Brown, Mrs. Kay Dickey, Mrs. Marjorie Mishler and Mr. Richard Gauger, proof reading.

2/8/04 – Second printing 2/21/04
Donna Sands

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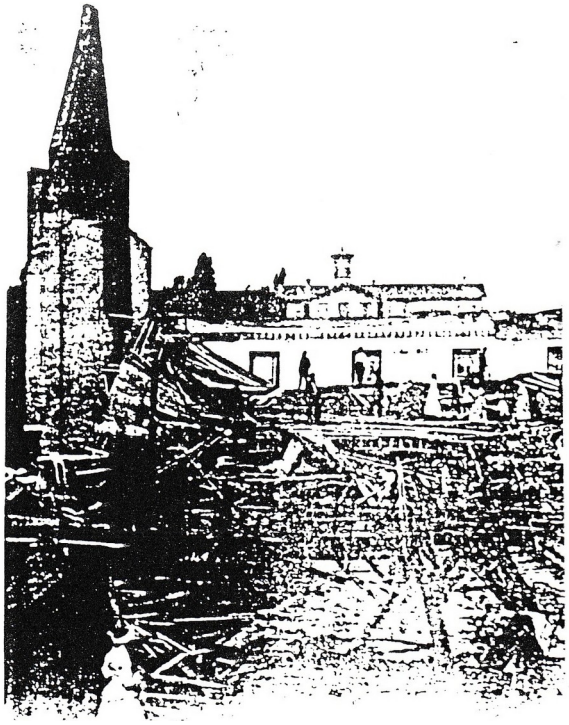
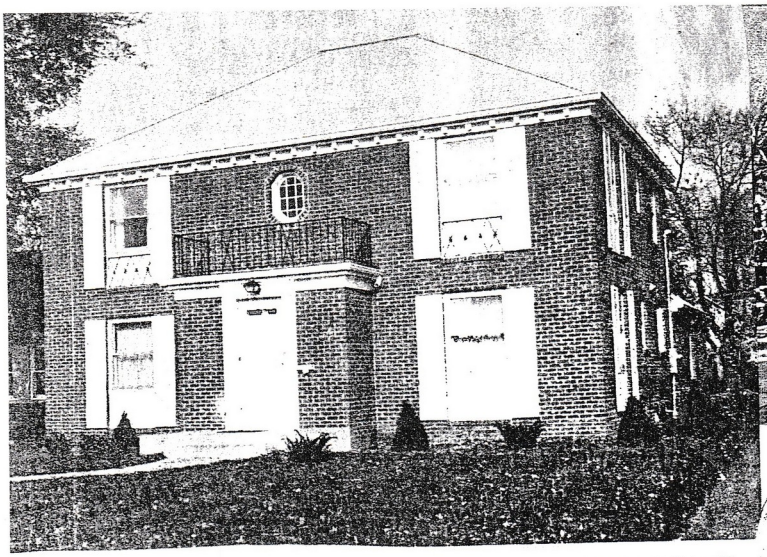
ILLINOIS GREAT RIVERS CONFERENCE
VERMILION RIVER DISTRICT - 2004
First United Methodist Church
200 East Maple Street
Fairbury,Illinois 61739-1167
815-692-2543 / fax: 815-692-4805
email: Email: fbryumc@route24.net
Rev. Max Borah, Pastor
Mrs. Carol Vaughan, Secretary
Beth Schweizer, Organist/Choir Director
Denise Brown, Organist
Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Sutter, Custodians
~~~~~~~

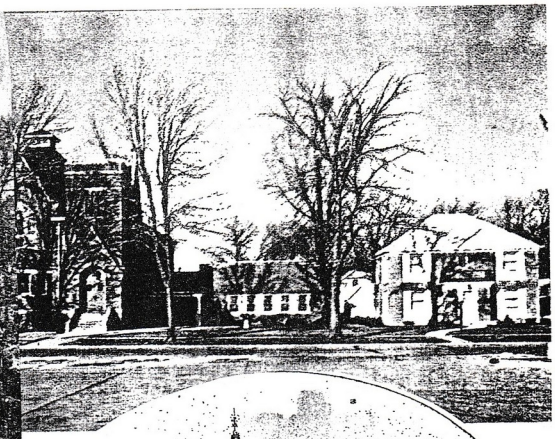
The picture to the right was copied from a souvenir dish and shows the church which immediately preceded the present structure. It stood where the parsonage now stands. Some members of our congregation remember when it was razed and the parsonage was moved to make way for the present building in 1901.

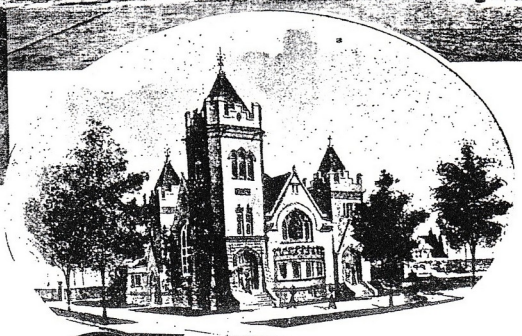
This picture was taken shortly after completion of our present church building in 1902. A very few of our present members participated in some manner in the work of erecting this edifice.

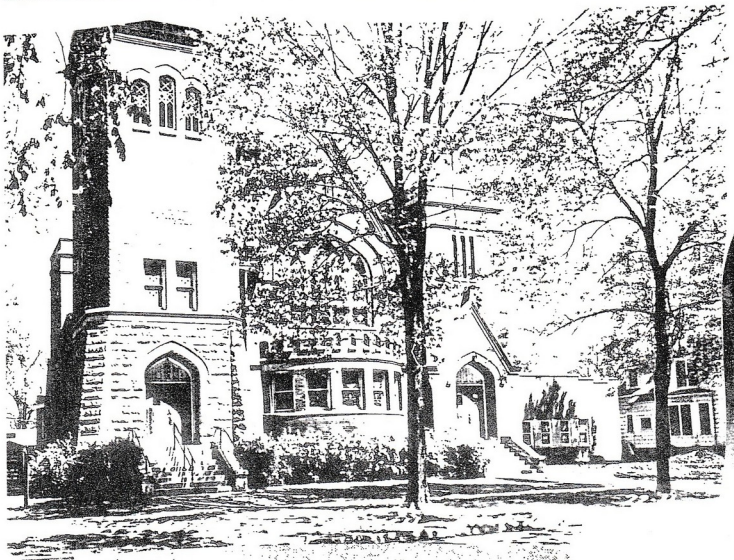
Pictured below are the ruins of the Fairbury Methodist Church which was destroyed by a tornado shortly after it had been built in 1877.

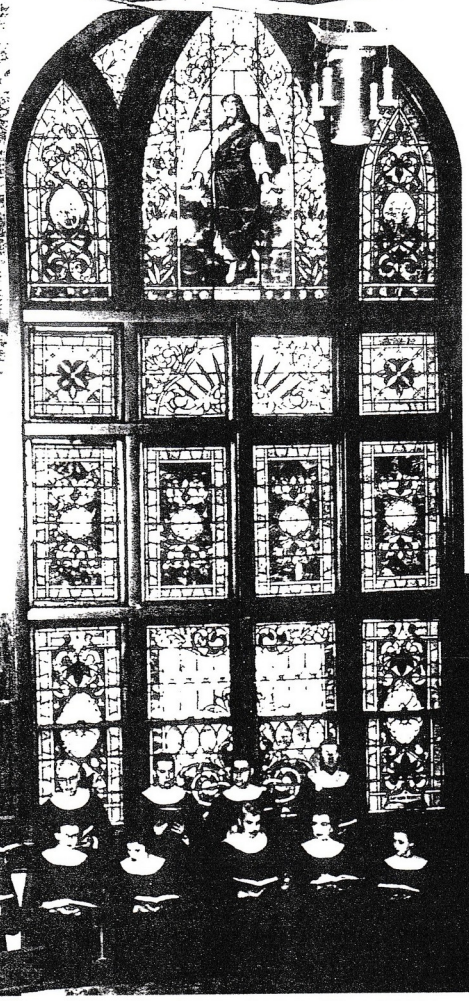




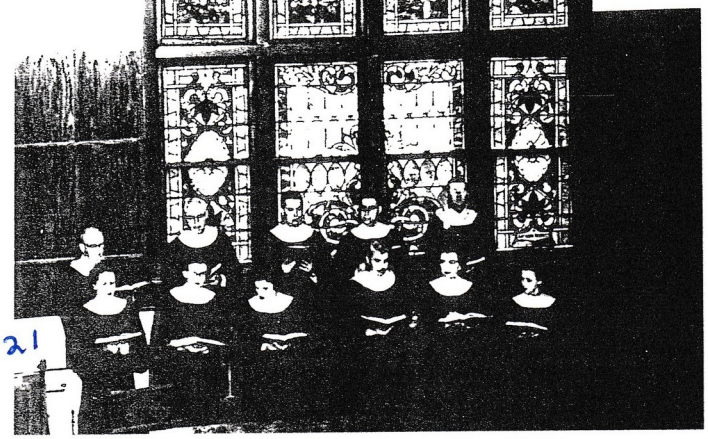


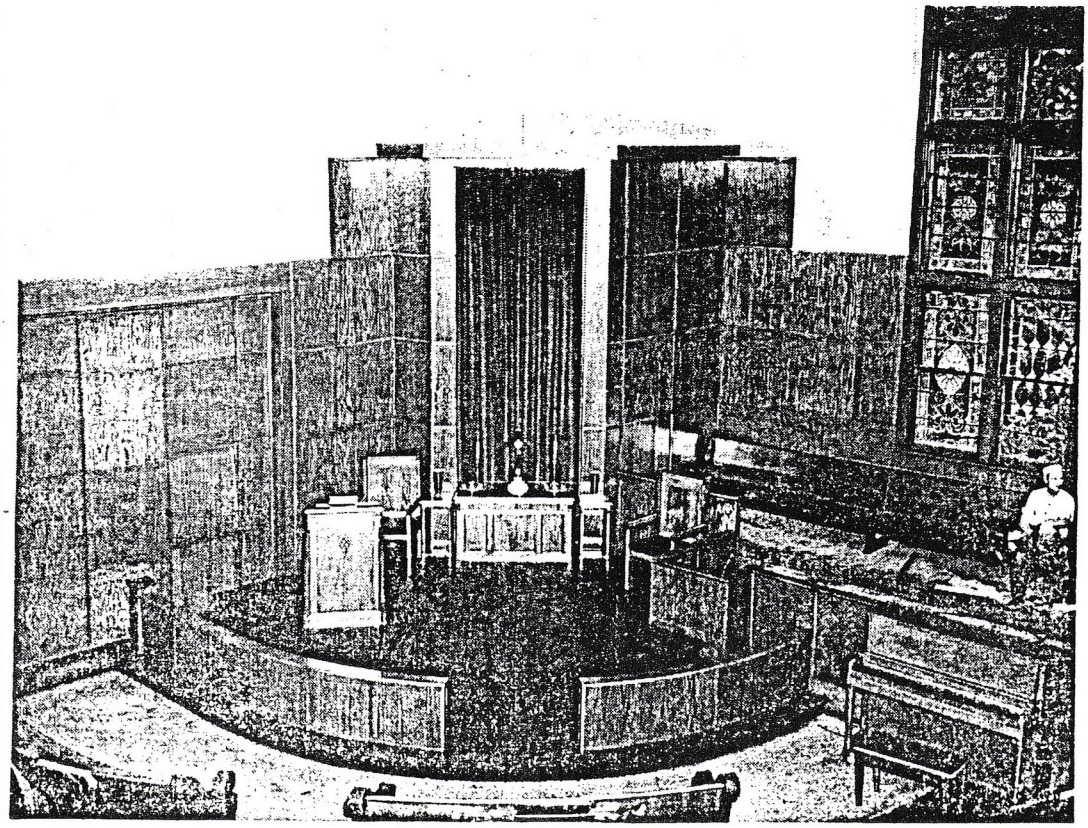






Second Methodist Church building, constructed in 1876, was leveled by tornado.





'Lonesome Louie!'

Feb. 1970

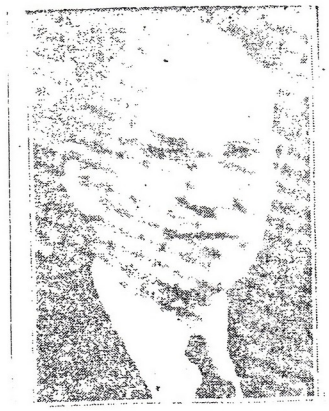
LONESOME LOUIE — That's the title applied to this photo made some 15 or more years ago at the time the Fairbury Methodist church was being remodeled.

At first glance, all you see is the church lectern and altar; but nestled over there in the right hand corner, eating his lunch, is Louie Kaisner, one of the carpenters working on the job.

This photo, by Wally Fergusen and property of Virg. Munz, has been lost for several years. It just came to light a week or so ago, in the back of a frame containing another picture. It was a considered classic in its time among a lot of folks, but it was never, until now, very widely distributed. And during the years it was lost, Louis was most upset, particularly with Virg, but now all is well.

Rev. C. L. Shult was pastor of the First Methodist Church from 1945 to 1949, when he suffered a stroke while visiting a member of his congregation and died three days later, on June 5.

Rev. Wirt Lowther, pastor 1910—1912.



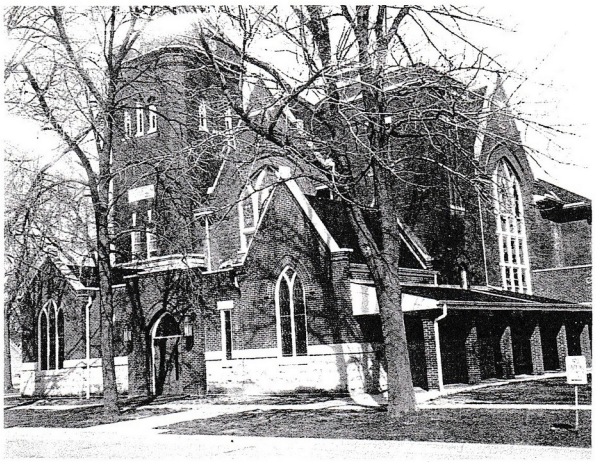
THE REV. R. E. BUFORD.

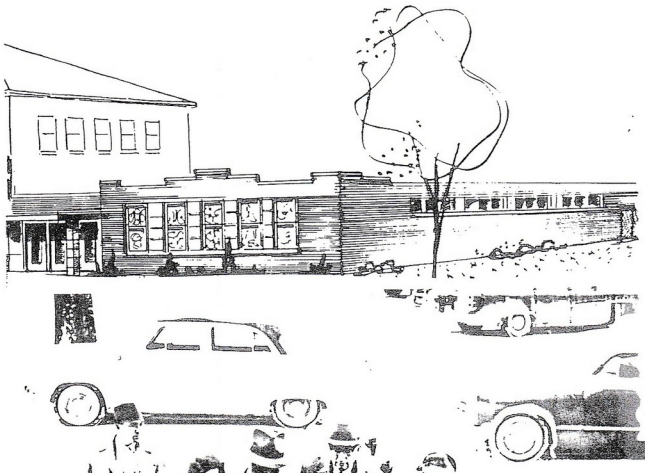
Rev. R.E. Buford

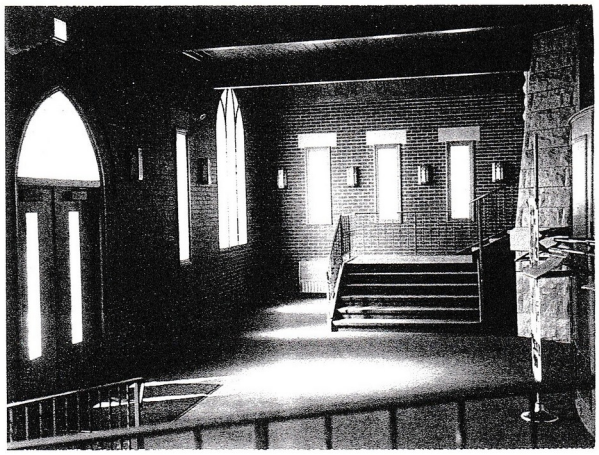
JUNIOR CHOIR

C 1943

L to R: Sherril Scott, Janet French, Wayne Sutter, Rose Marie Porter, Delores Moser, 2nd row: Dale Albee, Jacqui Weeks, Alice Nash, Delmar Mallicoat, Jeannette Smith, Beverly French, Ronald Walker, 3rd row: Elaine Stiver, Jeannette Kelson, Jim Steidinger, Keith Stiver, Dick Mowry, Dean Moser, Frank Combes, 4th row: Charles Tagg, Janet Householder, Jeannine Weeks, Lucille Moser, Dale Scott, Raphael Zimmer, Stanley Tagg, 5th row: Joan Kelson, Helen Honegger, Lauretta Nash, top row: Margorie Weeks and Mrs. L.R. Tagg.

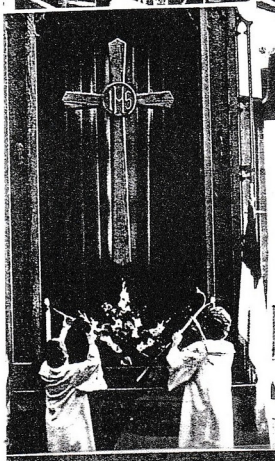






Rev. Russell

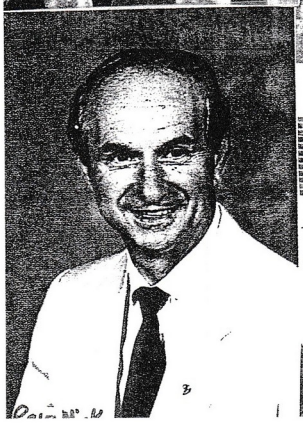
Rev. Deal



Rev. Bragg

Rev. Tapp

Rev. Buford



Rev. Smith

Rev. Sharon, Crystal Monroe

Rev. Rubie Russell

Alice Hansel...

Mrs. Jean Gould

Names on back

Names:
(beginning at top row, left to right)

1. Mr. Hugh McKee
2. G. B. Gordon
3. Mrs. Gordon
4. Mrs. Aaron Becker ?
5. Mrs. Ulfers
6. Mrs. Simon Beckler
7. Mrs. George Day
8. John Kring

Slightly forward in photo

9. Mrs. John Kring
10. C. Stockham
11. Mrs. Clinton Stockham (D.C.)
12. George Day
13. Mrs. Emma Bartlett
14. Mr. E. S. Wilson
15. Logan Kring
16. Charles Steinberg
17. Mr. Blakesley
18. Edna Ross Anderson
19. Mona Kring Baker
20. Jessie Love
21. Olive McKee
22. Mr. Robert Watt
23. Hugh Robinson
24. D. A. Robinson
25. Rev. E. S. Wilson
26. Mrs. Jennie VanDorn
27. Mrs. S. J. Ross
28. Mrs. Kerr
29. Mr. Aaron Becker
30. Mrs. Becker
31. Mrs. Earnhart
32. Mrs. Fugate
33. Mr. David Wright
34. Mrs. Lena Hahn
35.
36.
37. Mrs. Decatur Veatch
38. Mrs. Matheney
39. Mrs. Charles Crowe
40.
41. Aunt Sallie Lowe
42. Mrs. Gideon L. Powell
43. Mrs. Phoebe Dominy
44. Mr. Steidinger
45. Mrs. Martha Powell
46. Mrs. Jas. Kirby
47. Mrs. Dan Street
48. John Will McDowell

Photo from "Old Folks Dinner – 1913-14..reprint 2/8/04

Photo labeled as belonging to Jessie E. Love, now located at the First United Methodist Church of Fairbury office, Fairbury, Illinois.

Epworth League, Rev. Gideon Powell, Pastor

Ministers
The First United Methodist Church, Fairbury, Illinois

1857 .....W. J. Stubbles
1858 .....W. A. Presson
1859.....B.P.Wheet and E. H. Penfield
1860 – 1..J. Grundy
1862.....S. B. Baker

("Brother Baker was taken sick on the way to his appointment and died at Chenoa, November13,1862. His body was interred in the Fairbury commentary, where a monument was erected to his memory. Brother Baker was the first man appointed to Fairbury after it became an independent charge. Previous to this time it was a part of Avoca circuit. Rev. John Huston a local preacher, filled the vacancy caused by the death of Rev. Baker")

1863 – 4 ....J. G. Evans
1865.....J. E, Rutledge
1866-7, 8.....S. G. Havermale
1869 – 70....W. C. Knapp
1871 – 2.....William Watson
1873.....R.G. Pearce
1874.....W.P. Graves
1875 -6.....R. B. Williams
1877.....John Wilkinson
1878 – 9.....M. F.Havermale
1880.....B. W. Baker

(After about eight months of very efficient work, Brother Baker resigned, on account of ill health, and sought the invigorating climate of Colorado. Rev. E. S. Wilson was transferred from the West Virginia conference to supply the charge.)

1881 -2 ....E. S. Wilson
1883.....J. W. Haney
1884.....R. Crewes
1885.....W. McPheeters
1886.....G. R. Palmer
1887 - 8.... R. B. Williams

1889-90…..Ed. Wasmuth
1891-92-93.L.F. Cullom
1894-95-96-97-98- E. S. Wilson
1899-90…M.A. Head
1901-02-03-04-05-06-
J. A. Johnson
1907-08-09 –M. V. Crumbaker
1910-11-12 – A. Wirt Lowther
1913……..Gideon L. Powell
1914-15-16…S. A. Chapman
1917-18-19-20..George Thrope
1921-22-23-24- D. F. Wilson
1925-26-27-28 – John V. Kennedy
1929-30-31-32-33- M. B. VanLear
1934-35 …..Virgil Thompson
1936-37-38..R. E. Buford
1939-40…..M. L. O'Harra
1941-42-43-44…L. R. Tagg
1945-46-47-48-49..C. L. Shult
(died June 5, 1949)
1949-50-51-52-53-54…Cecil Lockard
(died 1955)
1955-60…..William C. Jones
(1960 deceased)
1960-61-62-63-64…Roy Goodell
(deceased)
1964-65-66-67-68…..Richard Brinkman
(deceased)
1968-69-70-71-72-73-74..George Russell
308 North Bauer Ct.
Pontiac, Illinois 61764

1974-75-76-77-78-79…Delmar Smith
237 Algonquin Dr.
Canton, Illinois 61520

1979-80-81.....Prospier Tournear'
102 West Frankln
Wyoming, Illinois 61491

1981-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89 –
David Deal
302 Holly Street
Marshall, Illinois 62441

1989-90-91...Richard Mick
225 Churchill Crossing
Nicholausville, Kentucky 40356

1991-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-00-01-
Stanley Rapp
106 Chickasaw Lane
Loda, Illinois 60948

2001-02-03-04-05 – Max Borah
201 West Walnut
Robinson, Illinois 62454

2005-06-07-08- ....Charles McDonald
200 East Maple
Fairbury, Illinois 61739

First United Methodist Church, Fairbury, Illinois "The Stained Glass Windows"

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August 7, 1903

"The new windows have been placed in the Methodist Church!" This was a praise that was heard in places about town for the new stained glass windows added to the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Fairbury, Illinois 1903.

Stained Glass - 1. film coated, colored glass or 2. Color-dyed throughout known as Tiffany. Although the actually origin of stained glass is lost in history, it is believed internationally that the art of stained glass came from jewelry making ~ such as cloisonné and mosaics. In fact the 10th century is known for depictions of Christ and Biblical scenes in various buildings of worship. .Historically the oldest known stained glass in churches was at St. Paul's Monastery in Jarrow, England, (1500's) long before any stained glass arrived in the United States. Much later stained glass making became the first industry set up in Jamestown in the United States, as the nation began to flourish. There is somewhat of a mystery as to how do the particles needed to form glass become known to the craftsmen. The answer is mostly guesses, but it is known that taking a form of matter with gas, liquid and solid state properties is the basis of the glass. Silic acid and metal oxides which solidifies after melting also aided the process. Glass actually consists of 70% silic acid with up to 20%alkali for durability and soda for fluidity. Adding metallic salts and oxides actually captures the spectrum of white light allowing human eye to see various colors.
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The techniques of stained glass was described by a monk, Theophilus, who wrote a 'how to guide' for craftsmen, so over time stained glass became Art Glass. Many believed presence of beautiful objects such as depicted with stained glass would lift men's souls closer to God. Perhaps it made the church that special, sacred dwelling place of an all powerful God. Much speculation and many thoughts surfaced as stained glass traveled in and out of fashion in those early years. More often churches featuring the Art form known as stained glass was important. Yet other periods of time stained glass would be so popular that it could be found in an average home. In fact many homes in Fairbury do have a window or window in a door that are stained glass. The Bolton Brothers, English immigrants, established one of the first active stained glass studios in America in late 1700's. Their gothic style windows enhanced churches and simple ornamental windows, often found in Post Office and or civic buildings throughout the United States. John LaFarge later developed and copyrighted opalescent glass and Louis Comfort Tiffany, soon thereafter, popularized it allowing the style to reach into a distinctive American style as seen in the windows of many Methodist churches. Subjects featured in the stained glass windows were often individuals from the Old Testament of the Holy Bible; particularly characters from the life of Christ, the Prophets and the apostles.

As we gather facts and stories of stained glass today, we recognize three strong categories: Hand Stained/pictorial glass, Cathedral Glass and Opalesant Glass.. These types are further defined : 1. Hand Stained and Pictorial Glass – distinct from the leaded glass, faceted glass and has it's own unique appeal. It is usually about one inch in thickness and its surface is often faceted or chipped. Other types of glass are bound together with U shaped cast lead called cames. Faceted glass is held together with an epoxy- a cement-like substance which allows the spaces between the glass to vary if desired. 2. Cathedral Glass is the transparent glass that usually contains only one color and is considered cathedral glass.

Hand stained pictorial scenes, symbols or designed be incorporated for effect and beauty. 3. Opalescent Glass a mix glass in which one piece may be from two to five color combinations.

The photos featured herein, while not professional; do show the examples of the stained glass in the First United Methodist Church of Fairbury, Illinois. It is this writer's belief that the stained glass featured in this church is the most extensive portrayal of stained glass in this community. Some windows/doors that are now clear glass were also at one time stained glass and for whatever reason had to be replaced. (For example the west entrance door windows, the south front door entrance) (Newer colored glass windows were installed with the addition of the Fellowship Building and the Narthex.) The larger stained glass windows located on three sides of the main sanctuary have been reinforced and repaired as needed throughout the years in order to protect, preserve and secure the windows.

An internet author claims that all stained glass windows have a symbolic border/trim. The windows in the sanctuary have muted grays, lavenders, and blues. The outer borders denote the Christian's struggle against adversity. The red inner borders symbolize the intensity of the Christian's faith since the twelve apostles took the word of Jesus and began to spread it through the world. The clear glass signifies the future, which Christians are noticed as dedicated followers of Jesus, thus being seen clearly through the eyes of faith. Some of the aforementioned colors are identified in the windows here in this church, while others are not easily defined. The metal gold produces stunning cranberry colors, cobalt actually makes blue colors, often referred to as cobalt blue, silver creates a yellow or gold color and copper yields greens and shades of brick red.

the Dedication actually took place in 1909 with the Reverend E S Weldon, officiating.

the Good Shepherd

The large stained glass window on the east side of the church main sanctuary, over the choir seating area, represents Christ with his hands raised in a blessing. This window was dedicated to the Pastor Rev. J. A. Johnson, who served the church from 1901 – 1906. Two of the lower level windows are in memory of W. K. Stafford and Anthony Bennett. These windows are located to finish the grand picture/story of Christ's Blessings to all. The Stafford and Bennett names are easily recalled by members; alas no relatives of these families remain in the church today.

On the South wall/section of the main sanctuary, the large window of Christ kneeling in prayer at Gethsemane is a window that was donated in memory of Mrs. Mary Frances Filley. This garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem is believed to be the place where Jesus and his disciples prayed the night before the crucifixion. (Luke 22:43-44.) (Where the apostles buried the Virgin Mary.) The Biblical narrative of the Passion is featured in brilliant colors using lead came to help define the entire figure picture in glass.

Below the Gethsemane scene under the balcony, are a series of small windows donated by the Epworth League, the Jr. League, The Sunday School. The Women's Foreign Missionary Society and the Women's Home Missionary Society. Each of the five windows is identical in pattern, color and size. Presently these windows can easily be viewed from the inside of the main

sanctuary and from the entrance into the more recently added Narthex.
Picture insets on each window depict a scene as envisioned from the Holy Bible. In general, the pictures are giving reference to the parables in Proverbs. (Old Testament) (From L to R the first window –

Sower of the seeds – parable – this story tells us that we are required to increase what has been given to us. Matthew 13: 1-23, Matthew 4: 1 -20. Luke 8: 4-18 and March 4: 8 – making sure that each is accountable for what has been given to us. In this window there appears to be a bearded man dressed in overalls, short sleeved shirt and hat who stands holding a scythe. The plants flourished and the sun glows through yellow and red glass. Above this figure the star, an open book and a flame, all references to Israel, the vision and perhaps the state.
The mountain beauty/heaven pictorial window was dedicated by the Sunday school members. The window shows the oxen in the field, and a light rain is occurring – nourishing the efforts.

The corn/maize growing was dedicated by the Jr. League

W.H.M. Women's Home Missionary dedicated this window with a view of the harvesting the wheat.

Flowers are featured in this window and is dedicated by the Epworth League

The Narthex was added in _____and a more contemporary color of opalescent glass was selected to compliment the main church building stained glass features. This is a coated effect on class. Glass covered panels cover the hanging lights in

the Narthex, giving the introduction to the grandness of the other stained glass enhancements within the church.

On the West side of the main auditorium is the large window of Christ and His sheep. The Shepherd finds his sheep, keeps it close to him and rejoices having found the sheep. An appropriating act. John 15: 1-24.

Beneath the balcony on the West wall of the main sanctuary are smaller windows given in memory of Mrs. Lizzie Carman Jenkins and Samuel G. Crull. These two windows follow the same color scheme, design and patterns of the lower windows elsewhere in the sanctuary.

The window in the former Choir prep room, now part of the entry hallway ramp on the east, prior to entering the sanctuary is a window dedicated to the memory of Jesse Rariedon. (Sadly the print is disappearing from this original art work of the stained glass at the bottom of the window.)

Sunday School classes donated windows in all the upper and lower classrooms, identified by numbers indicating either the year 1900's 2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, and 15 that they were purchased, installed and donated. Possibly the actual grade levels that met in those rooms were thus identified by the numbers on these windows, as was suggested by one of our current church members. The actual intent is not identifiable at this writing.

Four windows in the "tower Room" (Southwest upper corner of the main sanctuary) have no printed information appearing on the windows. It was also suggested that those windows were damaged by a storm at one time and thus were either replaced or carefully restored. Close looks with a magnifying glass yields to the idea of a replacement at a date later than the original windows found elsewhere in the sanctuary. The three slim windows on the west staircase from the main building appear of the earlier vintage, but are not marked in any manner. The main sanctuary entryway prior to the addition of the Narthex also featured two very large doors with stained glass in the upper one third of the doors. These doors were removed when the Narthex was added.

Many of the beautiful stained glass windows were also donated by the Stafford (Mrs. Floyd (Mariam McDowell) family in honor of L. B. Dominy (Mrs. Stafford's grandmother) and Dr. Lorenzo Beach (Mrs. Stafford's great grandfather). Other relatives of these families would include Mrs. Ella (James Holforty, Mr. Percy C. James III, Fairbury, Mrs. Olive (James) Davis, Florida and Mrs. Phoebe (James) _____.

The actual monetary values of the stained glass in the church are not determined at this writing. There is a comparison with the Moss Point, Mississippi, Dantzler Memorial First Untied Methodist Church with the stained glass – recent storms such as Katrina Hurricane in 2005 caused the Trustees to take extra concern regarding the insuring the church building and especially the stained glass windows as well as the unique, huge tiffany stained glass dome located in the center of the sanctuary ceiling. After much research they were advised no insurance would be available due to the cost of this type of glass replacement. Piper City , Illinois ,United Methodist Church, Colfax, Illinois United Methodist Church and Second Presbyterian Church, Springfield,

Illinois also feature many stained glass windows relative to those at Fairbury.

Some people have referred to the stained glass windows as the "Poor Man's Bible", explaining that many that attended church services were non-readers, therefore were dependent upon the pictures in the Bible stories told in the art. Other enjoys the beauty of the colors and designs and fined the stained glass windows inspiring and stirring true emotions of faith. Still others question the need of such displays as the stained glass. Regardless of all the opinions, the privilege remains, that everyone has the freedom to enjoy the stained glass beauty and stories. A heritage of faith. Proudly and thankfully the members and friends of First United Methodist church have dutifully given good custodial care and preserved the inspiration of the stained glass windows. It's a tremendous, rare and extraordinary opportunity to study and admire the stained glass windows. We can look deep and see how intrinsically beautiful the stained glass windows inspire, yet help members reflect and project in worship at any time. Often the opportunity to observe the windows with the morning sunlight or artificial lights in the evening from the inside or outside are inspiring.

Thanks to our forefathers that made it possible for so many generations to enjoy the stained glass windows and the stories that they depict from the Bible, located, at the Fairbury First United Methodist Church. 300 East Maple, Fairbury, Illinois

Researcher:: Donna M. Sands

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"The Fairbury Blade." 1949, Sect.2, pg.4 History of the First United Methodist Episcopal Church

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Internet 5/30/08….Religious Stained Class. Wikipedia

Interview 9/29/08..Rev. David Greer, Pastor, Dantzler Memorial First United Methodist Church, Moss Point, Mississippi

Thompson, Mary Emma. Westfield. Depression Era Art Projects; Stained Glass Art in U. S. Post Offices.

"The Chicago Tribune" 1920 Stained Glass